

Donald R. Alter

# THE LINCOLN LEGEND AND OTHER PROGRAMS



## *The Lincoln Legend and Other Programs*

by

DONALD R. ALTER

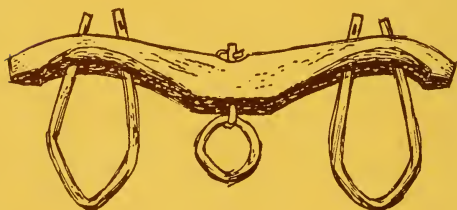
Here is a collection of dramatic and instructive presentations that will prove invaluable to teachers, women's clubs, church groups, radio and television programmers. It is also a fine contribution to the art of teaching through entertainment.

Each of these four programs, "The Lincoln Legend," "Prince of Peace," "Renaissance Portraits," and "War and Peace" is a perfect blending of poetry, historical data, music and narration, all so finely integrated that they form a harmonious and entertaining whole. All are easy to present with no settings (though settings may be added) and usually require only one complete rehearsal.

Flexibility is indeed a keynote of these programs. Each may be performed by one or several actors. In length it may be shortened to meet the time limits of radio or expanded for a fuller production. Suggested music that perfectly complements the narra-



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*and Other Programs*



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by

DONALD R. ALTER

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Lincoln Room

*Dedicated  
to the  
memory  
of*  
PROFESSOR HENRY JOHNSON



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is grateful for all permissions and special arrangements whereby he has been enabled to use certain parts of these programs. They are as follows:

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The author also wishes to express his thanks to Dr. Kevin Guinagh and Dr. Eugene Waffle, heads of Eastern Illinois State College's Foreign Language and English Departments, for their generous advice and encouragement.

The summary of information about the letter to Mrs. Bixby was made after a careful reading of *Abraham Lincoln and the Widow Bixby* by F. L. Bullard, Rutgers University Press, 1946.

The version of Virgil's "Fourth Eclogue" here presented is an altered version of the well-known translation by C. S. Calverley. The alterations are for the purpose of making the poem more useful for public reading without essentially changing the sense. The more poetic expressions are still those of Virgil and Calverley.

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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## *PART* I



AMERICA IS A LAND OF ORGANIZATIONS, SOME mandatory, but most of them voluntary. Churches, schools and clubs abound—especially clubs. There are political clubs and clubs that bar politics from their discussions. There are specialized groups (clubs, classes, etc.) within the churches and the schools. There are clubs to promote special causes, clubs for parents and clubs for teachers, clubs for pleasure and clubs for relief of pain. The list is too long even to begin here. Many persons have been heard to say we are over-organized. Yet we keep on joining. Not only do we join the old ones; every day we start new ones.

Such clubs, however, furnish the motivation for printing in a book the programs here assembled. For almost all clubs need programs at some time or other. Some clubs need them all the time. Program chairmen are often at their wits' end for another program.

For programs, many clubs, such as service clubs and luncheon clubs, depend largely on their own membership. Individual members can tell about their vocations, their avocations and their vacations, and the rest are content (expected) to listen. These groups have found that such programs should be and commonly are limited by time. Also, any member, when he is involved in a business deal, feels free to get up and leave when his appointment is due.

Service clubs are community-centered and often request programs based on community enterprise. The mayor or the

fire chief may be called on to speak. These clubs sometimes go to the schools for help and a school group presents to the luncheon meeting such materials as may illustrate educational progress. School leaders are almost invariably members of the service clubs and so the school contacts are quite easily made.

Women's clubs are even more ubiquitous than service clubs. They too depend upon their own membership for programs. These are frequently of a cultural nature and call for considerable preparation. Sometimes these clubs start in a highly specialized field and branch out into related subjects. Thus, a Shakespeare Club may become a Drama Study Club. Sometimes women's clubs are divided in their interests and form departments for specialized study, but all of their members remain within the membership of the parent group. In any case, they try to provide programs which are entertaining, yet which have enough substance of a cultural nature to be worthy of their intellectual effort.

Parent-teacher groups are found almost everywhere. Since their interests are focused on the school and its progress, it is natural that they should depend upon the school for much of their program building. A teacher may be called upon to provide a program. Such a program is often expected to illustrate what school children have learned to do. There is, however, a call for parents and teachers to participate in their own programs. This, indeed, is a departure often needed in such a group.

To sum up, here are some characteristics of a successful club program:

1. It should be brief and relatively concentrated.
2. It should, however, be somewhat flexible as to time allotted. That is, it should be capable of somewhat more leisurely and extended treatment.

3. It should be stimulating so that, time permitting, a lively discussion will follow.

4. It should be flexible, too, in the number of persons taking part. This is especially important where the participation of more than one member is desired. A program where any number from one to ten can be used, and where one can easily be substituted for another, is especially desirable for group work.

5. It should not require too long or extended preparation or too many meetings of the entire participating group.

6. On the other hand, it should, if possible, contain the potential of further attention and study, so that if a group so desires, its members can find avenues for extending their knowledge and interests.

7. It should be simple and direct enough so that a person of ordinary intelligence and preparation can follow its course and understand its conclusions.

8. Conversely, it should provide sufficient intellectual stimulation to hold the attention of persons of some erudition and philosophical insight.

9. It should combine something old—common knowledge—with something new. (The newness may consist merely in a new arrangement or it may include materials less well-known or actually new.) This combination is needed to create a true learning situation and a true basic interest.

10. At special seasons of the year a program should obviously be well adapted to the occasion.

Each of the programs included in this book fulfills all or most of the above requirements or desirable qualities. For example, the "Lincoln Legend," as written, runs about thirty-five minutes, but by leaving out the prologue and the first poem it may be read in exactly twenty-nine minutes—just enough time for a service club program or a half-

hour radio broadcast. Such timing would naturally require some rehearsals beyond that normally given.

The "Lincoln Legend," too, is well adapted for seasonal use, though not necessarily so. It may be given at any time. The "Prince of Peace" is useful only at the Christmas season, but fills a great need at that time. The other two programs are not associated with any season of the year.

All the programs may be expanded by a judicious use of music and made additionally colorful by background music supplied at intervals. Such additions, though, should be used only when talented and restrained persons are available to carry them out.

Despite the above approach to our volume, these programs were not designed or developed for club use. They are, essentially, educational experiments, developed in college classes in world history. As experiments, they make several points for world history teaching:

1. They show that music, literature and historical materials may be combined in an effective way, a way which adds to the interest of each.

2. They add to the interest in history, especially by concentrating on a particular phase of history or on some general idea having historical significance.

3. They add a human element to history by bringing to bear on its problems the thoughts and words of poets and other persons not primarily historians.

4. Each deals with a problem of historical synthesis, that is, of putting together historical data to establish a more general historical concept. Thus, the "Lincoln Legend" deals with the concept of the great man in history; the "Prince of Peace" with the long and persistent course of an idea, recurrent through the ages; "War and Peace" with events that follow the cycle of revolution; "Renaissance



Portraits" with a picture of life in a distinctive and well-defined era of the past.

5. Each gives some consideration to the problem of historical sources and their value. This is a main aspect of the "Lincoln Legend," but present in all four.

To sum up these points: It is clear that these programs may be of great value to high schools and colleges in classes of literature as well as history. They can be used either as a stimulating introduction or as a worthwhile summary of a body of material. For example, a college class in Browning, advanced though it may be, could get off to an excellent start in the course by a presentation of "Renaissance Portraits." The same program, once prepared, could be presented to the local women's club to promote good public relations with the college

More useful still, high school classes in English, where poetry is sometimes considered a baneful requirement, may become aware of its meaningful values by this treatment. This is especially true of "War and Peace." English and history teachers could even collaborate and present this as an all-school program in conjunction with the music department and the audio-visual personnel.

History teachers who deal with the "Lincoln Legend" will find this program a very useful summary of or introduction to the whole Lincoln story. Seventh or eighth graders could read at least some of the parts. Such a program could be used extensively throughout the community any time early in February.

Colleges devoted largely to teacher training should make their prospective teachers aware of these programs as a means to more effective presentation of both history and literature. The best way to create such recognition is by their presentation in the college classrooms, before the col-

lege assembly, over the college radio, or before local clubs and societies.

The possibilities of using these programs in varying combinations of school-community relationship are nearly unlimited. They are greatly increased by the relative ease with which these programs may be prepared for effective presentation, and the assurance of success which will reward any sincere groups attempting them.

As suggested, these programs can be read by an individual. It is better from several points of view, however, that a number of persons take part. For each program there is a prologue, a narration, and a number of readings. This would suggest a minimum of three participants, with one person doing all the readings and the director giving the prologue. However, the readings are varied in style and content and, for best results, should probably be assigned to individuals whose personalities seem to fit. If the director knows the parts and knows his people he can probably accomplish this without tryouts. In some cases, tryouts are desirable and, when well handled, produce excellent results.

The maximum number to take part would therefore be determined by the number of readings plus one prologue reader, one narrator, one to three musicians, and a director. Teachers and program planners often find it good to use as many persons as possible. For practical reasons, too, there should be substitutes available for all parts, as sudden illness might otherwise cripple the performance. Often a person will be found who does all parts well and no one part in outstanding fashion. Such a performer is most valuable as a general substitute. He should be recognized on any printed program.

The personnel once selected, the director should listen to the reading of each part. He should be equipped to make



suggestions as to what a certain passage means, how all words are pronounced, what inflections of voice may be changed, whether some ordinary, natural gesturing may be permitted (*or not*), and what other points of speaking he may deem advisable. Common sense must often be his guide in these things. He should remember that the reason for each selection lies in its meaning. He should make each reader see that his sole purpose should be to get that meaning into the minds of the audience. It is the director's task to see to it that each reader understands this and that he does accomplish it.

The director should on no account permit ordinary, correctable errors of pronunciation to continue. The best way to take care of these problems is to have a good dictionary at hand so there can be no doubt in anyone's mind as to what is right. Especially when dealing with adults is this true, as some are always found who, though otherwise quite intelligent, seem to resent being corrected. When dealing with younger persons it is also well to refer to authority of this kind since it promotes a good attitude toward and a respect for the proper use of their American tongue.

There probably should be at least one general rehearsal which should come when all have a reasonable mastery of their parts. The idea of the general rehearsal is to familiarize the group with the program as a whole, so that each sees just how his own reading fits into the rest. To this end it might be well to have a general preliminary reading as well as a final or "dress" rehearsal. Thus, each participant will realize from the start just how to read his selection to the best general advantage.

A general rehearsal is also good to develop the overall spirit of the occasion. These programs, by their emphasis

on meaning, tend to de-emphasize dramatic effects. Such effects are, indeed, permissible *within* a given reading. Well done, they will add much to the meaning of the program. Yet the overall spirit should be somewhat casual rather than dramatic, as befits a series of readings designed to stimulate thought and carry out an idea.

This spirit is established by the prologue but must be maintained by the narration. The narrator, in fact, carries the success of the program on his shoulders. His reading must be clear and distinct; every word must count. The speed of his reading will depend on his audience. For well educated adults he may read fairly rapidly. For younger or more general audiences he should slow down to a pace suited to the occasion. He should always keep in mind that, though *he* is familiar with what he is going to say, *it is the first time* for the audience. He must therefore read slowly enough so that they can follow and understand the meaning of his narration.

In addition, the narrator must be alert to take up the narration quickly when a reader has finished and to prepare the way for a reader about to begin. He must also carry out the specific means for bringing the entire production to a successful close or conclusion. This conclusion will, of course, be planned in consultation with the director.

The narrator's presentation should tend to be businesslike and matter-of-fact, though not, of course, monotonous. He should realize he has a job to do and to get done. He should read his part in that spirit. This is additionally important so that whatever dramatic effect is inherent in the readings will be the more effective by contrast with his crisp, businesslike performance.

To enable the narrator to carry out his work, the matter of reading and seating arrangements calls for some plan-

ning. If only three or four persons participate, they should all stand throughout the reading. If a group of seven or more is used, only those reading should be standing at any one time. Thus, three reading stands (music stands may be used) are sufficient for any performance.

Let us visualize a performance by ten persons to see how this might be done.

It is a small stage or platform set with three stands in front and nine chairs behind. The chairs are not in a row but spaced in two rows with intervals between. The piano is off to one side or down on the floor with the audience. The cast file in and take seats in no particular order. The pianist goes directly to the piano and sits there. The prologue reader, for whom no chair is provided, enters last and proceeds directly to the right hand reading stand and reads his part. As he nears the end of his reading the narrator casually and unostentatiously rises and assumes his place in the center. As the narrator starts reading, the prologue reader, quietly and in no hurry, sits down in the chair just vacated.

From this time on, each reader rises and takes his place at one or the other stand as the narrator nears the end of the reading which leads up to his part. Afterward, when his part is finished, he resumes his seat as the narrator resumes his narration. In each case the reader should time his movements to be ready to start at once, yet without seeming to "crowd" the narration. Also, in resuming his seat the reader should not *seem in a hurry* to leave but should sit down as soon as the narration is once more well under way. In case a reader reads two parts in sequence, he should, of course, remain standing during the intervening narration.

Since, in a group of nine or ten persons, some may be short and some tall, the two stands may be set at different

heights to accommodate the different readers without stopping to adjust them as the program proceeds.

The prologue has the task of setting up the spirit of the occasion and of introducing the nature of the subject matter to be used. The chief characteristics desirable in this reading are clearness and conviction. The reader should show he really believes what he is reading and should convince the audience of the value of what they are about to hear.

Each reader, in turn, has a similar task. He must adjust his reading, in part, to what the narration says about it. That is, he should strive to make it say in its own words what the narrator has said in anticipation of the reading.

This repetition of idea, telling the audience what they are about to hear and then giving them an immediate chance to hear it, is the most vital single element in this type of program. This makes each selection understandable, first, in and of itself, second, as a part of the whole. It is important for simple poems such as "The Battle of Blenheim;" for Browning's dramatic monologues it is an absolute necessity.

These thoughts concerning the nature and performance of the programs are admittedly sketchy and scattered. However, here it is enough to show the purposes of these productions and to give a glimpse into the uses to which they can be put, plus a few suggestions for their performance.

From this point, the local director must take charge. He has here the basic structures of four successful programs. What he makes of them depends on himself and on the personnel he is able to assemble for the parts.

Good luck and happy landing.

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# THE LINCOLN LEGEND

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## *PART* II





## *Introduction to "THE LINCOLN LEGEND"*

THE GREAT EMPHASIS UPON HISTORICAL SUBJECTS in current movies, radio and television has tended to make the modern American conscious of historical accuracy. Persons who formerly, perhaps, took their entertainment as they found it, now are inclined to ask whether a fact presented or a situation depicted is historically true. History teachers, subject to such questioning, are naturally aware of this recent development in our society.

To point up this new interest in critical value to college classes, the "Lincoln Legend" was developed. The narration makes the point abundantly clear that some parts of any general historical concept are nearly true, some are nearly false, and a great many lie somewhere in between. The "Lincoln Legend" derives much of its educational value from such critical comments.

Its entertainment value is inherent in the readings themselves. This is not because they are new, since most of them are already well-known. Rather, it is because they are inherently worthy of interest and are now presented in a new way, connected by a narrated, continuous theme.

The "Lincoln Legend" was originally a timed program and was read in exactly twenty-nine minutes on a number

of occasions. Afterward, a prologue and the poem about the log cabin were added. If these are left out, any group, through practice, can time it just as exactly again.

For background music to the "Lincoln Legend" the melody of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" is most effective. A few bars of this on the piano are immediately recognizable. Judiciously added at intervals between the readings, and before and after the performance, such passages create a very good atmosphere for the program. Needless to say, the pianist must remember that the music is background and not the program. Also, the director should remember that music is not necessary to the success of this program. It is an added touch if the proper person is available to give it.

In selecting personnel for this program, comments on the prologue reader and the narrator given in the general introduction should be applied. For the parts where Lincoln himself speaks, one reader, if versatile enough, may do them all. This is especially true if his voice and appearance in any measure tend to simulate those of Lincoln. If two readers read the Lincoln parts (where Lincoln himself is speaking), it should be remembered that the first ones present him as an easygoing frontier storyteller, while the Gettysburg address is given with the utter sincerity of a mature president speaking on a most solemn occasion. So, the story of Farmer Bell is told with an eye twinkle and perhaps an occasional grin, though ending, indeed, on a very thoughtful note. Thus, it fits in well with the two little stories earlier in the program.

The seriousness of the Gettysburg Address, on the other hand, suggests that this reading, if necessary, be combined with "Lincoln, the Man of the People" as the part of one speaker. That is, the same type of reader who can do one



well should also be able to give the other superior treatment.

Other combinations in the hands of a single speaker are: "O Captain! My Captain!" with "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight," because of their common mystical spirit; and "Ann Rutledge" with the "Letter to Mrs. Bixby," because of the quiet, underlying emotional stress evident in each of the two readings.

The same person who reads the prologue may also read the prose part about the Lincoln books. Too, this same reader or another prose reader may be used to break in on the narration at the point where the facts concerning Mrs. Bixby are presented. The reasons for making this break are, of course, to relieve the narrator, break the monotony of one voice and give one more person a chance to take part in the program.

On this last point, the director should remember that from an entertainment point of view there is much to be said for using only a few exceptionally talented readers. Where there are a number of persons of nearly equal talents, however, it is better to use the many than the few. Use of the many gives a cooperative sense, permits the audience to anticipate new voices, and allows more persons to have a part in the general effect.

The "Lincoln Legend" is especially adapted for use on or about the time of Lincoln's Birthday, February 12. Because of the increasing interest in Lincoln everywhere, however, and because of the emphasis on the aspect of historical accuracy, this program is useful at any time or in any place. During a course in American history it naturally introduces or sums up a study of Lincoln or his period. In English classes it may introduce the field of modern American poetry by showing the significance of these few ex-

amples. In classes in interpretive reading, it should be especially useful as a means of showing the need for correct interpretation and the possible appeals to an audience.

Whenever it is prepared for class work it should also be offered to community groups as a special program. This will accomplish two results. First, it will give added incentive to the school work itself. Second, it will promote good school and community relationships.

The "Lincoln Legend" will probably be the most widely used of the four programs. It has been presented a number of times by different groups and before different audiences. It has pleased college assemblies, Rotarians, English teachers and rural school parent groups, to name a few. It will be equally well-liked in church groups and clubs or wherever a good, substantial program is needed.

## *Prologue to THE LINCOLN LEGEND*

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### **READER:**

*ABRAHAM LINCOLN STANDS HEAD AND SHOULDERS* above all other Americans in world history. It has been said that in faraway places, many who have not heard the name of any other American yet know the name of Lincoln. An Englishman, H. G. Wells, a man with some reputation for historical knowledge, was once requested to list the world's greatest men. He named only six and Lincoln was one of these. In his own land, too, Lincoln's fame seems to expand rather than diminish as the years go by.

What are the items of specific fact or of general belief that cause one man to be remembered in this way, while other men of greater potential brilliance, or of greater pretensions in their own day, are largely forgotten? Clearly, no one fact or set of facts about a man's life, however spectacular these may be, will bring such lasting, growing fame. Instead, it is the cumulative effect of many facts and ideas, all leading directly to the same conclusion, that provides material for an eventual estimate of superlative greatness.

Thus, Lincoln's fame does not dim but brightens under an ever closer scrutiny into his words and deeds. His story is no longer our memory of a man. It is the record of a life—a life open, peculiarly strong, peculiarly substantial; a

life unbelievably kind and generous, strangely simple yet remarkably profound; a life seemingly free from all taint of pride in its own place or in its own achievements.

The theme of this man's greatness, in short, is rapidly becoming a legend. This program is designed to clarify certain aspects of the "Lincoln Legend."

The narrator of our program will be ..... of .....

### *NARRATOR:*

The best-known part of the Lincoln legend, and a part incontestably true, is that he was born in a log cabin. In fact, we still have the cabin. It stands close to its original site, enclosed in an outer shrine of gleaming white stone designed on a classic model. To the imaginative visitor the Greek columns, neat landscaping and parking lots seem strangely out of place. Yet, if he is willing to try, he can still feel the spell of the real and the primitive lurking here. Particularly is this true as he peers into the limestone spring from which Lincoln's parents must have lugged many a bucket of pure water up the hill to the cabin. He can almost imagine the tiny barefoot boy, Abe, trudging up the path behind his mother or his father on such an errand.

One modern writer has attempted to picture the simple and unromantic life of that time and place in a simple poem. She visualizes the casual encounter of two hunters as they meet along a wagon track in the near vicinity of the Lincoln cabin. In their conversation, these two men are contrasting the excitement of the great world outside with the quiet of their own life. They mention James Madison, about to become president, and Bonaparte, then causing so

much tumult across the sea. The din in Washington and the turmoil in Europe seem far away from Hardin County, Kentucky, early in the spring of 1809. The main and concluding theme of the poem is "That nothin' happens down this way."

It is not so much a poem, then, as a comment on the nature of history. Sometimes, the suggestion is, the most important events of all are the little, usual things, like the birth of a child—a child perhaps destined to change the course of life for millions. Such was the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and of many another, too. Yet these events are inevitably overlooked in the confusion and hubbub that ever surround us. It is probably even so today.

Listen now, while ..... of .....reads the poem, "In Hardin County, 1809."

READER:

IN HARDIN COUNTY, 1809

*Lulu E. Thompson*

With flintlocked guns and polished stocks,  
Knee breeches and long homespun socks,  
Two hunters met in eighteen-nine  
(The morning of Saint Valentine)  
Across the line from Illinois.  
They stopped their mules and voiced their joy;  
"Why Ben! It has been a long spell  
Since I've seen you . . . the folks all well?  
Bring any news from up near town?"

"Why, yes . . . you know John Ezry Brown?  
They say that he's a-goin' down  
To Washington in all the din  
To see Jim Madison sworn in . . .  
And this young feller, Bonaparte,  
Is tearin' Europe all apart;  
The fightin's awful 'cross the sea!  
Leastways that's what they're tellin' me."

"Wal, wal, nice day, tho kinda breezy—  
Mule's a gettin' quite oneasy;  
Now come and see us some time, do,  
And bring the gals and Hepsy, too.  
Got any news to send along?"  
"No, nothin' worth a tinker's song . . .  
There's nothin' happens here near me—  
Doggonest place you ever see;  
Tom Lincoln lives right over there  
In that log cabin bleak and bare—  
They say they have a little babe  
(I understand they've named him Abe).  
Yes, Sally said just t'other day,  
That nothin' happens down this way!"

#### NARRATOR:

A second well-known part of the Lincoln legend is that he had a keen sense of humor and a ready wit. One story which illustrates this very well relates an incident at the time of the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

Lincoln, we know, had remarkably long legs and Doug-



las, his opponent, remarkably short ones. A group of men, having noticed this great difference, were discussing the matter. As Lincoln joined the group one of them asked him, "Abe, how long ought a man's legs to be, anyhow?" Lincoln looked at him curiously, then said;

READER:

"Well, I think a man's legs should be at least long enough to reach from his body to the ground."  
*(The answer to this question should be given by a voice intended to simulate that of Abraham Lincoln.)*

NARRATOR:

Lincoln's sense of humor was sometimes employed in behalf of a friend. Some years before he became president, a New York firm is said to have applied to him for information concerning the financial standing of one of his neighbors. Lincoln could not bring himself to acknowledge that the young man had little or no financial standing, yet could not tell a falsehood about it. The letter he wrote illustrates very well the strange mingling of truth, humor and human sympathy that were so characteristic of Abraham Lincoln.

READER:

*Gentlemen:*

I am well acquainted with the man in question and I know his circumstances very well. First of all, he has a wife and baby. Together they should be worth \$50,000 to any man. Secondly, he has an office in which there is a table worth, say \$1.50, and two chairs worth, say \$1.00. Last of all, there is in one corner a large rat hole, which will bear looking into.

*Respectfully,*

A. LINCOLN

**NARRATOR:**

Lincoln's capacity for clearness of understanding and of expression is well known. At no point does it appear to better advantage than in the parable-like stories he sometimes used in making some point very clear. One of the best of these stories appears in a famous novel, *The Crisis*, by the American author Winston Churchill.

The story is designed to show Lincoln's political followers just why he plans to ask Judge Douglas a certain question. Lincoln wishes them to see that if Douglas answers the question one way he will win the election for senator from Illinois, but will be rejected for the presidency two years later. Lincoln believes that Douglas will answer it that way and that the foreseen results will follow.

The words of this parable are supplied by Winston Churchill, the author. They could very well have been Lincoln's own. Listen to Lincoln's story as told by .....



## READER:

“Boys, did you ever hear the story of Farmer Bell, down in Egypt? I’ll tell it to you, and then you’ll know why I’ll ask Judge Douglas that question. Farmer Bell had the prize Bartlett pear tree, and the prettiest gal in that section. And he thought about the same of each of them. All the boys were after Sue Bell. But there was only one who had any chance of getting her. His name was Jim Ricketts. Jim was the handsomest man in that section. And Jim was accustomed to getting a good deal out of life. He’d had all the appetites and some of the gratifications. He liked Sue and he liked a luscious Bartlett. And he intended to have both. And it just so happened that that prize pear tree had a whopper on that year, and old man Bell couldn’t talk of anything else.

“Now there was an ugly galoot whose name isn’t worth mentioning. He knew he wasn’t in any way fit for Sue, and he liked pears about as well as Jim Ricketts. Well, one night here comes Jim along the road, whistling to court Susan, and there was the ugly galoot a-yearning on the bank under the pear tree. Jim was all fixed up and he said to the galoot, ‘Let’s have a throw.’ Now the galoot knew old Bell was looking over the fence. So he says, ‘All right’ and he gives Jim the first shot. Jim fetched down the big pear, got his teeth in it and strolled off to the house, kind of pitiful of the galoot for a half-witted fool. When he got to the door, there was the old man.

“‘What are you here for?’ says he.

“‘Why,’ says Jim in his off-hand way, for he always had great confidence, ‘to fetch Sue.’

“Well—the old man used to wear brass toes to keep his boots from wearing out, and he really used them that day. When he finished the job, Jim Ricketts was gone for good.

“You see—you see the galoot knew that Jim Ricketts wasn’t to be trusted with Susan Bell.”

### *NARRATOR:*

“If an outward and visible sign of Mr. Lincoln’s greatness were needed—he had chosen to speak to them in homely parables. The story of Farmer Bell was plain as day. Jim Ricketts, who had life all his own way, was none other than Stephen A. Douglas, the easily successful. The ugly galoot, who dared to raise his eyes only to the pear, was Mr. Lincoln himself. And the pear was the senatorship, which the galoot had denied himself to save Susan from being Mr. Rickett’s bride.”

As these stories show, the facts of history on the one hand, and mere stories out of the past on the other, are not necessarily one and the same thing. Combined, they go to make up the sort of fabric we may call a legend. Legend, once established, is often repeated and usually is hard to break down. This is especially true when the legend concerns a great man. It is most especially true when that man is a martyred president and that president is Abraham Lincoln. The legend of Abraham Lincoln contains both fact and fiction as all good legends do. ...., can you tell us something about the books that give us the real studies of Lincoln’s life?

(Voice 1 may again be used or, if it is to be that of Lincoln throughout, a third voice may be introduced at this point.)

#### READER:

The facts of Lincoln's life and achievements have been widely examined. Paul Angle's *Shelf of Lincoln Books* lists 81 works of undoubted scholarship, some of considerable size. In addition, the number of monographs, papers and articles dealing with Lincoln is really enormous. Novelists, poets, playwrights, essayists have all taken a hand. Collections of Lincoln stories and anecdotes would alone fill a number of volumes.

Lincoln books have been written to show him as a child, a young man, a soldier on active duty, a lawyer and circuit rider, a politician running for Congress, a man among his friends, a president dealing with Congress, a public speaker, a president dealing with his cabinet, a president dealing with constitutional problems, a president dealing with the press, even a president as a military strategist.

Still other books reveal Lincoln in personal relationship to some one man, as *Lincoln and Walt Whitman*, or *Lincoln and Herndon*, or in personal relationship to some problem, as *Lincoln and Liquor*, or *Lincoln and the Baltimore Plot*. Then we have him geographically located, as *When Lincoln came to Egypt*, or *Abraham Lincoln and Coles County, Illinois*. *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office* and *Lincoln and his Books* are added. Last but not necessarily least, we may mention such titles as *Lincoln, the Unknown*, *The Hidden Lincoln* or, indeed, the very *Soul of Abraham Lincoln*.

In all, there are now more than 5,000 separate titles or publications (not including magazine articles) on the subject of Abraham Lincoln.

### NARRATOR:

In addition to such materials, Lincoln's memory has been further modified in quite another way. Since his death numerous writers have tried their hand at interpreting his mind, his soul, and his spirit, as well as the more prosaic aspects of his conduct or his character. Altogether, a great volume of writing has developed; some good, some bad, and a great deal in between. Some of it is almost entirely false and some, no doubt, is just as nearly true.

Despite the volume of such writing, the Lincoln legend, as we know it, tends to develop around a few selected short items more or less familiar to all. These items, themselves, range all the way from almost complete falsehood to almost certain truth. Yet each one is today an incontestable part of the Lincoln legend.

The first of these, a poem by Edgar Lee Masters, called "Ann Rutledge," is a masterpiece of fiction. About all we are sure of here is that there was a girl by this name and that Lincoln, a long time after, *did speak the quoted words* "with malice toward none, with charity for all." Yet here are two grains of truth that give this poem its powerful impact. Notice how skillfully the poet has woven his words, so that within a few lines he has conveyed his message with telling force.

This poem will be read by ..... of .....

READER:

ANN RUTLEDGE  
*Edgar Lee Masters*

Out of me unworthy and unknown  
The vibrations of deathless music;  
"With malice toward none, with charity for all."  
Out of me the forgiveness of millions toward millions,  
And the beneficent face of a nation  
Shining with justice and truth.  
I am Ann Rutledge who sleeps beneath these weeds,  
Beloved in life of Abraham Lincoln,  
Wedded to him, not through union,  
But through separation.  
Bloom forever, O Republic,  
From the dust of my bosom.

*(Narrator should pause slightly, before resuming narration, at the end of each reading. A few bars of the background music "Battle Hymn of the Republic" may be added also.)*

NARRATOR:

This poem represents falsehood propaganda at its best, or worst. Many persons have tried to destroy the story of Ann Rutledge and there are current efforts in newspapers and magazines to do so. But the effect of a masterpiece like this poem will be hard to overcome.

The second selection is possibly the best known of all interpretive comments on Lincoln. It is by Walt Whitman and portrays the martyred president as a ship's captain who has brought his vessel safely into port but who, in the very



moment of triumph, lies dead upon her deck.

The poet here has conveyed a sense of personal loss that has seldom been equaled in fact or fiction. Yet it has been done with the dignity and restraint of a master hand.

“O Captain! My Captain!” has contributed greatly to the beauty and strength of “The Lincoln Legend.” It will be read by ..... of .....

*READER:*

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

*Walt Whitman*

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done!

The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought  
is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all  
exulting,

While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and  
daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle  
trills,

For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the  
shores a-crowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces  
turning.

Here Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck

You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,

My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse or will,

The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed  
and done,

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;

Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

#### NARRATOR:

A third selection has attempted to add a spiritual and even prophetic quality to the idea of martyrdom, so well established by Walt Whitman. Possibly no one but Vachel Lindsay would have dared to attempt this. A resident of Springfield, Illinois, Lindsay imagines that the great man's spirit cannot be at rest but walks the familiar streets of their "little town" in agony for a war-torn world. It is World War I, as the reference to "kings" so plainly indicates. One is almost led to wonder what Vachel Lindsay or his ghostly Lincoln would say to World War II or to its sequel of cold war and police action.

But, now, listen as ..... of ..... reads Vachel Lindsay's "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight."

#### READER:

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

*Vachel Lindsay*

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old court-house pacing up and down.

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to play,  
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,  
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl  
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,  
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.  
He is among us;—as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.  
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?  
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.  
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.  
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now  
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.



He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free:  
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,  
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

*NARRATOR:*

The preceding selections have each contributed to "The Lincoln Legend." Yet truth is always stronger than fiction; and the literary skill of Lincoln was possibly greater than that of any of his admirers. One wonders, indeed, what a poet he might have been, as we marvel at the sheer beauty to be found in many of his utterances.

In his Gettysburg Address Lincoln produced a masterpiece of succinct speech not likely to be equaled throughout the history of our race. Here is no fiction but utter truth. With startling and dramatic directness, tempered by a kindly human touch, he tells us exactly how we came to be here (that is, at Gettysburg), why we are here, and what we should do about it. At the end he defines democracy perfectly, yet in one breath, and sets up a goal worthy to endure through the ages. Truly this is a document for all time.

..... will now read the Gettysburg Address.

*READER:*

## GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. We are now engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

## NARRATOR:

The brilliance of Abraham Lincoln was demonstrated in the Gettysburg Address. His humanity and sympathy have been illustrated in a second composition, scarcely less

famous than the first. This is the letter to Mrs. Bixby, a mother of sons who were killed in the war. To her, Lincoln extends the "thanks of the republic they died to save."

This letter indeed has come under the fire of much criticism from those who try to prove that it is not an authentic Lincoln document at all. Questions in the case center around: (1) the personal character of Mrs. Bixby; (2) the number of sons she had and the number of those who actually died in the war; (3) where Lincoln got the idea of writing to her; (4) where he got the information about her which he states in the letter; (5) whether Lincoln actually composed the letter; and (6) where the letter is now.

*(Another voice may be used here—or the Narrator may carry through.)*

### READER:

The most careful and nearly definitive study that has been made reveals, indeed, some weakness in the structure of the legend, yet it leaves much of it standing in substantial form. These seem to be the facts of the case on the best evidence available:

(1) Mrs. Bixby was a widow, poor but respectable. (2) She had five (or possibly six) sons in the war. (3) Of these, two were actually killed, one was captured, one deserted, and one was mustered out of service a few days after the letter was delivered to her. (4) At one time, however, she seems to have reported the loss of five on the basis of reasonable evidence and to have done so in good faith. (5) The information came to Lincoln by regular channels, the sug-

gestion of writing the letter coming from the governor of Massachusetts. (6) Lincoln himself did write the letter and it was delivered to Mrs. Bixby and printed in the newspapers within a few hours, thus assuring us of an accurate copy of its contents. (7) The letter itself has long since disappeared and presumably has been destroyed. (8) Neither the letter nor a copy of it, in all probability, ever hung on the walls of the University of Oxford, despite an almost universal belief to that effect. (9) All current facsimilies are from forgeries and are not the actual handwriting of the great president. (10) There were at least two separate forgeries of this letter.

#### *NARRATOR:*

The one essential point is that Lincoln wrote the letter in the spirit which its contents indicate. This is the all-important fact, since it means we can accept the letter as a true revelation of his mind and his heart. To a mother, unknown to him personally, he extends the thanks of an entire nation. The happy balance of tenderness, faith and dignity achieved in this letter mark Lincoln for all time as a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that it marks him as a master of human relations such as this world has seldom seen.

As ..... of ..... reads this letter, imagine if you can the feelings of Mrs. Bixby when she received it, written out in the personal handwriting of the president of the United States.

READER:

Executive Mansion  
Washington, Nov. 21, 1864

To Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass.,

Dear Madam,

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

A. LINCOLN

NARRATOR:

In our sixth and last selection we return to the interpretive efforts of the poets. Edwin Markham's "Lincoln, the Man of the People" is a spectacular summary of all of Lincoln's fine traits. Dr. Coleman, author of *Abraham Lincoln and Coles County, Illinois*, has pointed out that Lincoln's greatness really lay in a remarkable balance of the finer



personal traits, and through it all, that he remained remarkably human. Markham's poem then, is essentially sound, essentially true.

Naturally enough, there is profound admiration here, if not indeed hero worship. Yet there is at least some truth in every statement and a great deal of truth in most. There is hardly a line that will not stand up under a careful scrutiny both of structure and of sense. Let us listen to ..... of ..... as he reads Edwin Markham's "Lincoln, the Man of the People."

*READER:*

### LINCOLN, THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE

*Edwin Markham*

When the Norn Mother saw the Whirlwind Hour  
Greatening and darkening as it hurried on,  
She left the Heaven of Heroes and came down  
To make a man to meet the mortal need.  
She took the tried clay of the common road—  
Clay warm yet with the genial heat of Earth,  
Dasht through it all a strain of prophecy;  
Tempered the heap with thrill of human tears;  
Then mixt a laughter with the serious stuff.  
Into the shape she breathed a flame to light  
That tender, tragic, ever-changing face;  
And laid on him a sense of the Mystic Powers,  
Moving—all husht—behind the mortal veil.  
Here was a man to hold against the world,  
A man to match the mountains and the sea.

The color of the ground was in him, the red earth;  
The smack and tang of elemental things;  
The rectitude and patience of the cliff;  
The good-will of the rain that loves all leaves;  
The friendly welcome of the wayside well;  
The courage of the bird that dares the sea;  
The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn;  
The pity of the snow that hides all scars;  
The secrecy of streams that make their way  
Under the mountain to the rifted rock;  
The tolerance and equity of light  
That gives as freely to the shrinking flower  
As to the great oak flaring to the wind—  
To the grave's low hill as to the Matterhorn  
That shoulders out the sky. Sprung from the West,  
He drank the valorous youth of a new world.  
The strength of virgin forests braced his mind.  
The hush of spacious prairies stilled his soul.  
His words were oaks in acorns; and his thoughts  
Were roots that firmly gript the granite truth.

Up from log cabin to the Capitol,  
One fire was on his spirit, one resolve—  
To send the keen ax to the root of wrong,  
Clearing a free way for the feet of God,  
The eyes of conscience testing every stroke,  
To make his deed the measure of a man.  
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,  
Pouring his splendid strength through every blow;  
The grip that swung the ax in Illinois  
Was on the pen that set a people free.

So came the Captain with the mighty heart;  
 And when the judgment thunders split the house,  
 Wrenching the rafters from their ancient rest,  
 He held the ridgepole up, and spikt again  
 The rafters of the Home. He held his place—  
 Held the long purpose like a growing tree—  
 Held on through blame and faltered not at praise.  
 And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down  
 As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs  
 Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,  
 And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

#### NARRATOR:

The selections in this program were chosen to give as nearly complete a picture as possible in the time allowed of "The Lincoln Legend." Whatever the historians have declared or are able to declare hereafter with regard to the strict scholarship of the Lincoln story, these items are very likely to persist as parts of "The Lincoln Legend."

*(Insert Music)*

The selections we read today were as follows:

The list of Lincoln books was read by .....

"Ann Rutledge" by Edgar Lee Masters

read by .....

"O Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman

read by .....

"Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight" by Vachel Lindsay

read by .....

Lincoln's voice and Gettysburg Address

read by .....



Lincoln's "Letter to Mrs. Bixby"

read by .....

"Lincoln, the Man of the People" by Edwin Markham

read by .....

Narrator, .....



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WAR AND PEACE

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*PART* III



## *Introduction to "WAR AND PEACE"*

"WAR AND PEACE" IS MORE NEARLY A STRAIGHT history lesson than any of the other programs. It demonstrates the essential idea of changing times. The times chosen are those in France: the autocracy of the old regime, the excitement of the Revolution, the enthusiasm for Napoleon, the downfall of that remarkable man. It ends with the continuance of the old regime in Russia and with the condemnation of Napoleonic militarism by an American.

This program is not propaganda for peace, though a number of the selections might indicate that it is. Instead, it is designed to show the sharp contrasts between war and peace. To this end, an exciting poem such as "Incident of the French Camp" is set over against the children's naive questions in "The Battle of Blenheim." Another sharp contrast is found in the two national anthems, of France and of Czarist Russia. Playing a recording of the "1812 Overture," after hearing both melodies, points up this contrast perfectly.

The musical selections are in this case an essential part of the program and may in no event be neglected. Just how each is to be presented depends on local facilities and local personnel. A satisfactory and simple combination, though

possibly not the best, consists of a record of the "Marseillaise," the music of "Rise, Crowned with Light" played on the piano, and a record of the "Festival (1812) Overture."

If a good singer is available who will enter into its spirit, the "Marseillaise" may well be a high point in this program, furnishing an excellent contrast with the later readings as well as setting the scene for the playing of the overture recording. A young, natural singer with a good clear voice and a talent for showmanship can, if he will take the time and make the effort to work it out, produce a splendid result with this number. He may, for example, using a book, sing the first stanza in French and then, laying the book aside, repeat the first stanza in English. A few carefully worked out dramatic gestures will add greatly to the effectiveness of the English rendition.

"Rise, Crowned with Light" may be sung by the same singer or by another. While it does not offer the same chance for display, it is important to the success of the enterprise. It should be played and sung with all the dignity and mystic richness that are implicit in its music and in the English words which so well interpret these characteristics.

Combination of "War and Peace" parts in the hands of a few readers is somewhat more difficult than in the case of "The Lincoln Legend." Yet it is by no means impossible. The prologue reader may also read the prose description of the Duke of Marlborough, perhaps the description of the overture, too. A somewhat emotional reader may handle both "Hohenlinden" and the "Incident of the French Camp," and another could combine the "Night Before Waterloo" with Ingersoll's oration on "The Tomb of Napoleon."

The somewhat lugubrious lines about the "Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna," coming after several exciting

numbers, is designed to bring a quiet interval at that stage of the program. It should therefore be read "slowly and sadly," with only a brief exhibition of national pride at the mention of a "grave where a Briton has laid him."

"The Battle of Blenheim" should be read in a way that will bring out the charm of the quiet domestic scene, enlivened by the active, wide-eyed children with their pointed comments and questions, and effectively implemented by the simple faith of the old man that "indeed," it was a famous victory.

Like "The Lincoln Legend," "War and Peace" may be read in its entirety by one reader, with some help with the musical parts. He would need a pianist and someone to play the recordings at the proper moments.

The program may also be read by a few persons or by a group of ten or more. The same advantages and disadvantages are present for either arrangement, as were noted in the introduction to "The Lincoln Legend." Unless the few are fairly talented persons, the larger number will be better because this adds variety of person and voice to the readings. It also provides opportunities for a larger number of persons to take part.

"War and Peace" has no connection with any American season. It may therefore be used at any off-season occasion. Prepared in class, it may be presented in the community or the school assembly.

In history classes it naturally is useful as an introduction or as a summary of the period it is designed to illustrate. In one case, where four sections of college history students had all completed a study of the French Revolution and Napoleon, this program was presented immediately before an examination. Two examination questions were then given: (1) How did your knowledge of this period

help you understand and appreciate the program "War and Peace"? and (2) How did "War and Peace" help you in summarizing and fixing in your memory the facts and ideas of the period just studied?

While results of this examination were in no way startling or brilliant, several of the essays revealed considerable insight and understanding of the relationships requested. Almost all the papers were satisfactory. All papers said they enjoyed the program, and some praised it to the skies.

"War and Peace" makes an excellent college or high school assembly program. In general, it is perhaps the most versatile and useful of all four. It is not related to any particular season and so may be used at any time. It also provides a great variety of moods, well-balanced with each other, and the opportunity for a number of dramatic moments. Ingersoll's fine summary of Napoleon's career makes an excellent ending.



## Prologue to "WAR AND PEACE"

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### READER:

WORLD HISTORY, AS WE SEE IT, IS A SUBJECT OF broadest scope. Its aim is to make man's entire world intelligible, to bring together into one comprehensive pattern all the important strands of the past. These include not only the records of events, what man has *done*, but also the records, where these are available, of what man has *thought* and of what he has *said*.

When we stop to consider the vast extent of man's life and the vast variety of his interests, we begin to realize that any *course* in world history is certain to be only a beginning. Yet, if man's world is to be comprehended as one great, blended whole, then *such* study is basic to *such* an understanding.

Among the records of the past we find those in which man has paused to estimate the value and meaning of his own performance. Many such estimates are consciously historical in character. Others seem to arise out of the conditions of a given moment or the surroundings of a certain locale. Often they seem created simply by "a remembrance of things past."

Records of man's thoughts arising out of such experiences are often of great value in making the world intelligi-

ble. Each is a deliberate attempt at evaluation of the past actions of men. Each is tempered by the writer's own experience and by his judgment in trying to determine which things are important.

In many cases, such records have been read more widely and sympathetically than the pages of history itself. For this very reason the history student is required to take them into account. Even where they are in factual error, they still can be made to yield a favorable result, for, by comparing the fiction with the fact we become increasingly aware of man's capacity for error and of the need for an ever closer scrutiny of *all* the evidence as we search for historical truth.

The present literary and musical program represents a summary account of a small portion of world history, namely, of the French Revolution and Napoleon. It includes the recorded views of different persons and of different *kinds* of persons on this subject. The title: "War and Peace" is taken from Byron's poem on "The Isles of Greece," or, if you will, from Tolstoy's famous novel by that name.

To give the historical touch, these selections begin with events before the Revolution and end a long time later.

Our narrator for this program will be .....

*NARRATOR (begins):*

Before the French Revolution continental Europe was in the grasp of rulers dedicated to the principles of absolute monarchy and power politics. This system, known as the old regime, reached its height under Louis XIV, king of France. Known as the "grand monarch," Louis became

an idol, almost, of the crowned heads of Europe. Each of them, in his own way, attempted to imitate the absolute rule of the French King and the extravagant display and manners of his court at Versailles.

Louis, on his part, was not satisfied with these glories, but sought a further outlet for his ambitions in waging a series of aggressive wars. In these wars he was consistently opposed by the little state of Holland and almost as regularly by Britain, her ally across the channel. Together, with whatever help they could muster, these two were able over the years to thwart the major purposes of the Grand Monarch.

A number of significant battles occurred during these wars. The most famous of these was the battle of Blenheim. In this battle the French armies were decisively beaten by the forces of the alliance. These were led by the English Duke of Marlborough and the Austrian Prince, Eugene of Savoy. It was a glorious victory for the English in particular, and left them in a position of great prominence in European affairs.

Especially prominent in world politics was the victorious general, John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough. His descendant, Winston Churchill, has justified his ancestor's greatness in his six-volume *Life of Marlborough*. By way of summary he has this to say of Marlborough's military skill:

READER:

"He commanded the armies of Europe against France for ten campaigns. He fought four great battles and many important actions. It is the common boast of his champions

that he never fought a battle that he did not win, nor besieged a fortress he did not take. Amid all the chances and baffling accidents of war he produced victory with almost mechanical certainty. Even when fighting in fetters and hobbles, swayed and oppressed by influences which were wholly outside the military situation, he was able to produce the same result, varying only in degree. Nothing like this can be seen in military annals. His smaller campaigns were equally crowned by fortune. He never rode off any field except as a victor. He quitted war invincible: and no sooner was his guiding hand withdrawn than disaster overtook the armies he had led. Successive generations have not ceased to name him with Hannibal and Caesar."

#### *NARRATOR:*

Of Marlborough's greatness in the total arena of world politics, Churchill continues:

#### *READER:*

"Until the advent of Napoleon no commander wielded such widespread power in Europe. Upon his person centered the union of nearly twenty confederate states. He held the Grand Alliance together no less by his diplomacy than by his victories. He rode into action with the combinations of three-quarters of Europe in his hand. His comprehension of the war extended to all theatres, and his authority alone secured design and concerted action. He animated the war at sea no less than on land, and established till the present

time the British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean. His eye ranged far across the oceans, and the foundations of British dominion in the New World and in Asia were laid or strengthened as the result of his Continental policy. He was for six years not only the Commander-in-Chief of the Allies, but, though a subject, virtually master of England. He was the head of the most glorious Administration in her history, when he led Europe, saved the Austrian Empire, and broke irretrievably the exorbitant power of France."

*NARRATOR:*

Despite the "great praise the Duke of Marlborough won," the Battle of Blenheim, we may be sure, was not all glory, for every battle takes its toll of human life and is attended by untold human suffering. The English poet Robert Southey recognized this in a famous poem, "The Battle of Blenheim." In this poem, a grandfather, who lived near Blenheim in his youth, is telling his grandchildren about the war.

This poem is a naive approach to the subject of war and peace. But the questions asked by the children are real questions, appropriate in any place, at any time. Over the years, despite its simplicity and childlike tone, this poem has been a perennial favorite.

Listen now, while ..... of ..... reads Robert Southey's poem, "The Battle of Blenheim."

*READER:*

## THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

*Robert Southey*

It was a summer evening;  
Old Kaspar's work was done,  
And he before his cottage door  
Was sitting in the sun;  
And by him sported on the green  
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin  
Roll something large and round,  
Which he beside the rivulet  
In playing there had found.  
He came to ask what he had found,  
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,  
Who stood expectant by;  
And then the old man shook his head,  
And with a natural sigh,  
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,  
"Who fell in the great victory.

"I find them in the garden,  
For there's many here about;  
And often when I go to plow,  
The ploughshare turns them out;  
For many thousand men," said he,  
"Were slain in that great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about,"  
Young Peterkin, he cries;  
And little Wilhelmine looks up



With wonder-waiting eyes;  
“Now tell us all about the war,  
And what they fought each other for.”

“It was the English,” Kaspar cried,  
“Who put the French to rout;  
But what they fought each other for,  
I could not well make out;  
But everybody said,” quoth he,  
“That ’twas a famous victory.

“My father lived at Blenheim then,  
Yon little stream hard by;  
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,  
And he was forced to fly;  
So with his wife and child he fled,  
Nor had he where to rest his head.

“With fire and sword the country round  
Was wasted far and wide,  
And many a childing mother then,  
And new-born baby died;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
At every famous victory.

“They say it was a shocking sight  
After the field was won;  
For many thousand bodies here  
Lay rotting in the sun;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
After a famous victory.

“Great praise the Duke of Marlboro’ won,  
And our good Prince Eugene.”



"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"  
Said little Wilhelmine.  
"Nay, nay, my little girl," quoth he;  
"It was a famous victory.

"And everybody praised the Duke  
Who this great fight did win."  
"But what good came of it at last?"  
Quoth little Peterkin.  
"Why, that I cannot tell," said he,  
"But 'twas a famous victory."

NARRATOR (*continues*):

When Churchill said that Marlborough "broke irretrievably the exorbitant power of France" he no doubt referred to the France of *that day*, to the France of the old regime. For he could not have been forgetful of the tremendous outpouring of warlike energy of the new France, the France of the Revolution.

Revolutionary France was indeed filled with a spirit seldom if ever equaled by any people in the course of all history. At the threat of outside interference this spirit was translated into a warlike vigor and splendid strength which was destined to sweep the older armies of monarchy and reaction from the field. In a matter of months after their first victory at Valmy the French had reached the natural frontiers coveted for centuries by French royalty, but not attained till now. Nor were the Revolutionary leaders satisfied with this. They intended to carry the blessings of

Liberty, Equality and Fraternity to all men everywhere.

It was inevitable that such spirit should break forth into song, and such a song was soon forthcoming.

"La Marseillaise" was written overnight by Rouget de Lisle, a French captain of engineers at Strasbourg. It was literally a command performance, for it was called for in the evening and delivered the next morning. It gained immediate acceptance as the marching song of the Revolution.

Its name, "La Marseillaise," was given to it when a band from Marseilles, "some 600 patriots, liberators and cut-throats" set out for Paris, "led by the radical, Barberoux." We may imagine this band swinging up the road to the exciting rhythm of the new march. Thus it came to Paris and thus it was named "La Marseillaise" after those who sang it.

"..... of ..... will now sing "La Marseillaise," one stanza in French and the same in English.

### LA MARSEILLAISE\*

*Rouget de Lisle*

Allons, enfants de la patrie,  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé.  
Contre nous de la tyrannie  
L'étendard sanglant est levé.  
Entendez vous dans les campagnes  
Mugir ces féroces soldats?  
Ils viennent jusque dans nos bras  
Egorger nos fils, nos compagnes:

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\*The words and music of "La Marseillaise" are found in many collections of songs for group singing and in such books as *Songs of Many Wars*, edited and arranged by Kurt Adler, published by Howell, Soskin, New York, 1943.

Aux armes, Citoyens!  
Formez vos bataillons,  
Marchons, marchons,  
Qu'un sang impur  
Abreuve nos sillons!

Ye sons of France, awake to glory!  
Hark! Hark! the people bid you rise!  
Your children, wives and grandsires hoary,  
Behold their tears and hear their cries.  
Shall hateful tyrants mischief breeding,  
With hireling hosts,  
A ruffian band,  
Affright and desolate the land  
While peace and liberty lie bleeding?  
To arms, to arms, ye brave!  
Th' avenging sword unsheathe!  
March on! March on!  
All hearts resolved  
On liberty or death.

#### NARRATOR:

After initial setbacks the revolutionary armies of France took the offensive and began to defeat their foes in every direction. Young generals took their places at the head of the French forces and soon proved their mettle and skill against the enemies of the Revolution, particularly against the forces of the Austrian Empire led by relatives of that hated "Austrian woman," Marie Antoinette.

One of these young generals was Moreau, who won a decisive victory over the Austrians at Hohenlinden. This

battle is remarkable in that we have an account by a non-combatant eyewitness. The Scottish poet, Thomas Campbell, was actually present, viewing the battle from the relative safety of a church steeple. The poem, "Hohenlinden," is an interpretation of what he heard and saw. Thus, the poet, though not a historian in the usual sense of that term, still gives us a feeling for the conflict that the historian might well have missed. Notice how the battle opens in nearly hysterical excitement during the night, then settles down to methodical slaughter with the breaking of the dawn. After the battle comes the quiet realization of the multitudes who lie forever stilled in death.

..... of ..... will read the poem "Hohenlinden."

**READER:**

### HOHENLINDEN

*Thomas Campbell*

On Linden, when the sun was low,  
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,  
And dark as winter was the flow  
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,  
When the drum beat at dead of night,  
Commanding fires of death to light  
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,  
Each horseman drew his battle blade,  
And furious every charger neighed  
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,  
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,  
And louder than the bolts of heaven  
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow  
On Linden's hills of stained snow,  
And bloodier yet the torrent flow  
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun  
Can pierce the war clouds rolling dun,  
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun  
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave  
Who rush to glory, or the grave!  
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,  
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few, shall part where many meet!  
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,  
And every turf beneath their feet  
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

**NARRATOR:**



Among the young generals developed by the Revolution was the brilliant Corsican, Napoleon Bonaparte. After a false start or two, Napoleon had his chance. He emerged not only as a victor on the battlefield but as a dictator at home, where he swept aside the corrupt and ineffective Directory to make himself First Consul of France.

To young Frenchmen of that day Napoleon was indeed the "Man of Destiny." They loved him as few rulers have been loved and they continued to fill the ranks of the French armies with an enthusiasm seldom seen. As soldiers they often died believing in his glory, and that he was in truth the Son of the Revolution that he claimed to be.

This spirit of blind adoration has been caught by the English poet Robert Browning. In his "Incident of the French Camp" Browning pictures Napoleon thinking about his plans of further conquest even as his troops are in the act of storming their immediate objective. A young man, scarcely more than a boy, and desperately wounded, brings him the desired message of victory. Deeply involved in his own plans, Napoleon yet notices the boy's wounded condition and expresses his concern. The boy dies, happy in the thought that his beloved Emperor has recognized him *as a person*, even in the hour of his own triumph.

Though this poem is dramatic and perhaps a trifle extravagant, the poet has here caught a sense of self-sacrifice not uncommon among the young soldiers of Revolutionary France.

..... of ..... will read "Incident of the French Camp."

**READER:**

## INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

*Robert Browning*

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon.  
A mile or so away,  
On a little mound, Napoleon  
Stood on our storming-day;  
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,  
Legs wide, arms locked behind,  
As if to balance the prone brow  
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused "My plans  
That soar, to earth may fall,  
Let once my army-leader Lannes  
Waver at yonder wall,"—  
Out 'twixt the battery smokes there flew  
A rider, bound on bound  
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew  
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,  
And held himself erect  
By just his horse's mane, a boy:  
You hardly could suspect—  
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,  
Scarce any blood came through)  
You looked twice ere you saw his breast  
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace  
We've got you Ratisbon!  
The Marshal's in the market-place,  
And you'll be there anon



To see your flag-bird flap his vans  
Where I, to heart's desire,  
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed; his plans  
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently  
Softened itself, as sheathes  
A film the mother-eagle's eye  
When her bruised eaglet breathes;  
"You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's pride  
Touched to the quick, he said:  
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,  
Smiling, the boy fell dead.

#### NARRATOR:

The excitement of the French Revolution culminated in the titanic struggle for power represented by the person of Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon's troops fought all over Europe but could not cross the channel into England. The British, on their part, put large armies in the field to oppose his dream of continental conquest. Among other scenes of Franco-British conflict was the Peninsular Campaign in Spain. At Corunna, the British, trying to embark, were attacked by French troops. These were beaten off in a spirited action led by Sir John Moore, who lost his life in the battle. The night burial of this gallant officer left an indelible impression on the mind of Rev. Charles Wolfe, an eyewitness to the sad event. His poem is a "composition of rare beauty and felicity of expression," presenting the mingled feelings

of courage and sadness represented in the loss of a beloved leader and soldier companion.

..... of ..... will read Charles Wolfe's "The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna."

**READER:**

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA  
*Charles Wolfe*

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,  
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly, at dead of night,  
The sods with our bayonets turning;  
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,  
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,  
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him,  
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,  
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,  
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;  
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,  
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed  
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,  
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,  
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,  
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him;  
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on  
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done  
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;  
And we heard the distant and random gun  
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,  
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;  
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,  
But we left him alone with his glory.

#### NARRATOR:

Although Britain was Napoleon's nemesis throughout his career, the resurgence of nationalism in other countries eventually told heavily against him. Many who were at first impressed by Napoleon's claim that he carried the benefits of the Revolution with him were completely disillusioned when his conduct belied his claims. Especially when he declared himself Emperor did he become completely discredited among the intellectual lovers of liberty. For example, it is said that the great German composer Beethoven

had written his Third Symphony in honor of Napoleon. When the news of the imperial designs of the Corsican upstart reached him, however, Beethoven tore away the first page bearing the now-hated name and nearly destroyed the composition itself. Later he produced it under the title "Sinfonia Eroica," and, though Napoleon was still powerful at the time, it was dedicated, significantly enough, "to the *memory of a great man.*"

Hatred of Napoleon persisted in some countries for generations after his death. Late in the 1800s Tschaikovsky was called upon to compose a piece suitable for the consecration of the Temple of Christ in Moscow. The result was the "1812 Overture," based on Napoleon's invasion of Russia and the eventual death march of his troops as they retreated before the horrors of a Russian winter.

Our plan for presenting the "1812 Overture" calls for three steps: first, we shall read a description of the music; then we shall hear the melody of the old Russian hymn, its concluding theme; finally, we shall present a portion of the composition itself. The description will be read by ..... of .....

### READER:

The "1812 Overture" has been called "bizarre and literally programmatic." It was designed to be presented on a gigantic scale in the public square at Moscow. In places, the composition called for salvos of actual artillery fire to replace the orchestral drums. At the end, the great bells of the city itself were to be used to help bring the presentation to a titanic conclusion.

The overture opens quietly. It describes a quiet land and a peaceful people. Old Russian hymns provide melody. Ere long, however, there is a tension in the air—the calm before a storm. The storm breaks in the Battle of Borodino. This was the last great defeat of the Russian armies before Napoleon entered Moscow. The battle rages as Russian folk tunes come into sharp conflict with the “Marseillaise.” The guns roar their deafening salvos amid the carnage. Finally, the tumult subsides. An ominous calm succeeds the uproar. The French enter the city. The “Marseillaise” is heard again, and yet again, as they begin their departure. Now its tones sound distantly as if in retreat. The last parts of the composition show the Russian jubilation at the defeat of the hated foe. There is a tremendous crescendo, a very long cadenza, and the overture ends to the triumphant strains of the old Czarist hymn, while the great bells of Moscow peal throughout the sky.

#### NARRATOR:

The Czarist national hymn, “Rise, Crowned with Light,” is the concluding theme of the “1812 Overture.” Its melody reproduces with startling clearness not only the solemn assurance of power implicit in the old regime of Russia, but also the overtones of mysticism that had been present in the imperial court since the days of Alexander I.

The words of this hymn, transposed to English by the eminent poet Alexander Pope, recapture in large measure the same assurance and the same mystic spirit.

It would be difficult to imagine a hymn more directly opposed to “La Marseillaise” both in shadow and in sub-



stance. Where the French hymn breathes the fiery spirit of revolution, the Russian hymn reflects the autocratic confidence of the old regime.

Listen now, while ..... sings the first two stanzas of "Rise, Crowned with Light."

### RUSSIAN NATIONAL HYMN\*

Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise!  
Exalt thy towering head and lift thine eyes!  
See heaven its sparking portals wide display,  
And break upon thee in a flood of day.

See a long race thy spacious courts adorn:  
See future sons, and daughters yet unborn,  
In crowding ranks on every side arise,  
Demanding life, impatient for the skies.

See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,  
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend:  
See thy bright altars thronged with prostrate kings,  
While every land its joy our tribute brings.

The seas shall waste, the skies to smoke decay,  
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;  
But fixed His word, His saving power remains;  
Thy realms shall last, thy own Messiah reigns.

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\*The words and music of the old Czarist hymn are found in *The Church Hymnal*, (hymn number 487), of the Protestant Episcopal Church after

## NARRATOR:

In listening to the "1812 Overture" selection, remember, we are playing only the last part. Our purpose is to get a glimpse of the spirit of rejoicing in Moscow over the French retreat. "La Marseillaise" is still in the air, but only as an echo. It is now replaced by the strains of the Russian national hymn amid the jubilant peals of the bells of the city. It marks the beginning of the end of Napoleon.

*(Here play the last 3 minutes, approximately, of some record bearing the "1812 Overture.")*

## NARRATOR:

Perhaps the most famous of all war poems in the English language is Lord Byron's "Waterloo." In this poem Byron presents similar ideas to those of Hohenlinden. To the excitement incident to the preparations for battle, however, is added the sadness of farewell, a sadness intensified by the "fear of no return." The element of fate is also notably exhibited in the prophecy of death confronting the Duke of Brunswick. Finally, the quiet succeeding the battle is felt in anticipation rather than in fulfillment. Altogether, this poem exhibits the master touch and well deserves its

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their general convention of 1892. This volume was edited by Rev. Charles L. Hutchins and published by The Parish Choir, Boston, 1896. The music may be found elsewhere, as in the current Methodist Hymnal, under the tune title "Russian Hymn."



lasting fame. Byron also takes occasion to mention the Scottish Highlanders who participated in the fight.

The background for this poem lies in the last desperate bid for power made by Napoleon. He had been terribly defeated nearly two years before at the great Battle of Nations, near Leipzig. He had abdicated his imperial throne, receiving in return the paltry island realm of Elba. From there he had suddenly reappeared in France and had been received by the French with wild excitement and exultation. After about three months he was ready to take the offensive and attacked the allies at Quatre Bras near Brussels, the prelude to Waterloo. There was actually a ball that night given by the Duchess of Richmond and the lines of Byron, quoting from Edmund Creasy, "are as true as they are beautiful."

Note the gaiety of the opening lines broken by the first, but as yet unrecognized sound of doom in the cannon's opening roar. Then comes the tumultous departure and the frenzied preparations for battle. Afterward, a few well-chosen phrases, beautifully descriptive of the dew-drenched dawn, lead directly to the thought of anticipated slaughter, with "farewells for the dying and mourning for the dead."

Listen now, while ..... of ..... reads Lord Byron's "Waterloo."

READER:

WATERLOO  
(Canto III, *Childe Harold*)  
*Lord Byron*

There was a sound of revelry by night,

And Belgium's capital had gathered then  
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright  
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;  
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,  
And all was merry as a marriage bell;

But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,  
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;  
On with the dancel let joy be unconfined;  
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet  
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—  
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,  
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
And if nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!

Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a windowed niche of that high hall  
Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear  
That sound the first amidst the festival,  
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;  
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,  
His heart more truly knew that peal too well  
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,  
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;

He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,  
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,  
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago  
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;

And there were sudden partings, such as press  
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs  
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess  
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,  
    Since upon nights so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste; the steed,  
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,  
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,  
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;  
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;  
And near, the beat of the alarming drum  
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;  
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,  
    Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe, they come!  
    they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose!  
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills  
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—  
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,  
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills  
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers  
With the fierce native daring which instils  
The stirring memory of a thousand years,  
    And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,  
Dewy with nature's teardrops, as they pass,  
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,  
Over the unreturning brave—alas!  
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass  
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow

In its next verdure, when this fiery mass  
Of living valor, rolling on the foe  
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,  
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,  
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,  
The morn the marshalling in arms—the day  
Battle's magnificently stern array!  
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent  
The earth is covered thick with other clay,  
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,  
Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent!

#### NARRATOR:

The career of Napoleon Bonaparte has been summed up by an American, Robert G. Ingersoll. In his oration on "The Tomb of the Great Napoleon" Ingersoll describes in a few magnificently colorful phrases the main events in the career of this magnificently colorful soldier. How it could be better done is hard to imagine, for Ingersoll almost makes us see Napoleon in many major acts of his career. He has selected these moments with startling accuracy and in exact chronological sequence. He has described each one in a single sentence, yet in such a way as to leave no doubt as to the meaning of his words or the significance of the act itself. It is a performance that should satisfy the most exacting critic either as to interpretation or the manner of its presentation. Listen now while ..... of ..... reads Robert G. Ingersoll's oration, "The Tomb of the Great Napoleon."

READER:

## THE TOMB OF NAPOLEON

*Robert G. Ingersoll*

"A little while ago, I stood by the grave of the old Napoleon—a magnificent tomb of gilt and gold, fit almost for a dead deity—and gazed upon the sarcophagus of black Egyptian marble, where rest at last the ashes of that restless man. I leaned over the balustrade and thought about the career of the greatest soldier of the modern world.

"I saw him walking upon the banks of the Seine, contemplating suicide. I saw him at Toulon—I saw him putting down the mob in the streets of Paris—I saw him cross the bridge of Lodi with the tri-color in his hand—I saw him in Egypt in the shadow of the Pyramids—I saw him conquer the Alps and mingle the eagles of France with the eagles of the crags. I saw him at Marengo—at Ulm and at Austerlitz. I saw him in Russia, where the infantry of the snow and the cavalry of the wild blast scattered his legions like winter's withered leaves. I saw him at Leipsic in defeat and disaster—driven by a million bayonets back upon Paris—clutched like a wild beast—banished to Elba. I saw him escape and retake an empire by the force of his genius. I saw him upon the frightful field of Waterloo, where Chance and Fate combined to wreck the fortunes of their former king. And I saw him at St. Helena, with his hands crossed behind him, gazing out upon the sad and solemn sea.

"I thought of the widows and orphans he had made—of the tears that had been shed for his glory, and of the only woman who ever loved him pushed from his heart by the cold hand of ambition. And I said I would rather have been a French peasant and worn wooden shoes. I would



rather have lived in a hut with a vine growing over the door, and the grapes growing purple in the kisses of the autumn sun. I would rather have been that poor peasant with my loving wife by my side, knitting as the day died out of the sky—with my children upon my knees and their arms about me. I would rather have been that man and gone down to the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust than to have been that imperial impersonation of force and murder, *Napoleon the Great*."

#### NARRATOR:

This concludes the program "War and Peace." Those taking part were as follows: . . . (*Here the narrator may list those taking part and the parts read, sung or played. As each name is read that person should stand so that the audience may applaud the entire group standing. This is a satisfactory conclusion for any of the programs. For example, see conclusion of "Lincoln Legend."*)





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THE PRINCE OF PEACE

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*PART* IV



## *Introduction to "THE PRINCE OF PEACE"*

"*THE PRINCE OF PEACE*" IS A CHRISTMAS PROGRAM which traces the idea of the Prince of Peace from the book of Genesis to the present day. Religiously, it expresses what all Christians desire to hear at Christmas time. Historically, it is essentially the long-range view of history made clear as the single idea is traced through the ages.

As a program it is very effective, taking the audience through varying expressions of the hope that some day the Prince of Peace will come, and culminating in the Christian belief that He is really here—a fact made possible through the miracle of Christmas.

Thus, while the program is limited to a seasonal appeal, it could be widely used at that time. Many new ideas for expressing the Christmas theme are currently present among us. Some of these are quite different from any we have heard before. The program "The Prince of Peace" combines in a new way many of the best older parts.

Without any denominational bias or special interpretation this program should be highly acceptable in all churches, embodying as it does a faith common to all. At the same time, both school and church groups will welcome it as a departure from the standardized pageantry so com-

mon at the Christmas season. In addition, this program fits in well with the thought of "putting Christ back into Christmas," which many club and civic leaders are sponsoring.

Historical criticism is not a main theme of this program, yet it has a place in this one as well as in the others offered in this book. Especially important is the tracing of an idea, ever changing, yet ever the same. Not what *all* Jews thought, but what *some* Jews thought through a long sequence of generations, not what *all* Romans thought, but what *one* Roman said, not what most men seem to regard as important in a modern atomic age, but what Christians know to be true—these are the emphases that bring out the critical values of this composition.

This program, when given, will probably be part of a longer one. In that case, since it ends with a prayer, it should probably come last. It might be preceded, for example, by a carol sing. If so, the carols should be of a religious nature or, at least, they should be offered in groups. Santa Claus songs, when used, should come first and then give way to those exclusively religious. A good atmosphere for the thought-provoking nature of the program is thus created.

Many such longer programs end with prayer, especially when they are given by church groups. This is good, since otherwise there may be some problem of bringing "The Prince of Peace" to an effective conclusion. The person offering the public prayer, however, should remember that a long drawn-out, diffuse discourse on his part may well detract from the effect of this presentation. It would be best, then, to pronounce a straight simple benediction or to repeat in brief form the same thought of the final stanza, namely, that the Holy Child of Bethlehem may indeed find a way into our hearts.

If no prayer is considered appropriate or felt to be need-

ed, it devolves upon the narrator to bring about a satisfactory ending. His choice of what to do will depend on local conditions and equipment. The director should consider this point and instruct the narrator as to how this can best be done. Dimming lights, pulling a curtain, or similar methods may be used. In case it is a carol sing, the song "O Little Town of Bethlehem" may well be repeated by the entire group with renewed attention to the last stanza as given by the reader. This is a splendid way to end the entire meeting, especially if it can be done spontaneously under the direction of an able leader.

In selecting persons to read the various parts of "The Prince of Peace" the director should remember his audience and the effect that certain persons may have there. This is particularly true if it is a church group, and especially in churches where more than usual reverence is given to the Scriptures. Also, in any case, if there should be a preference for a particular version of the Bible, it would be not too difficult to use the readings as found there. The ones printed in this book, however, are probably best from the point of view of effective reading. They are rhythmic, balanced and beautiful, and therefore recommended.

To facilitate the piano playing at the end of the program a rather specific arrangement is recommended. The accompanist at any presentation will, of course, modify this to suit his own playing problems, providing he takes due notice of the role the piano music has in this program. It should be emphasized over and over that the two stanzas of hymns are to be *read* and *not sung*. The point is that the meaning of every word must be clear if the audience is to receive the full impact of the program.

To see how important this is, let the reader ask his friends to recite the words of well-known hymns without

using the melody. Ask them to proceed to third and fourth stanzas, even where the first line is given. The results of this little experiment will show that some in your audience will become aware *for the first time* of the meaning of the words read in these two stanzas. This is why these stanzas are read and not sung.

Incidentally, the reader of these stanzas should be chosen with care. It should be someone who can unite the prophetic quality of the first with the prayerful and mystic character of the second and make the meaning of each abundantly clear.

The only other reading that calls for special comment is the one from Virgil's Fourth Eclogue. These lines are dependent upon a famous translation but have been altered to make them more readable without essentially changing their meaning. The reader, without becoming sing-song, should recognize the rhythm of these lines and try to capture their beauty as well as their power. The same principles apply to and should be fully utilized in the Bible passages, where great beauty is added to the message.

Sing-song reading of poetry is very likely to occur with some selections, notably, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day." The reader may most readily avoid this over-emphasis on rhythm by strict attention to meaning and by conscious effort at varying the ways of saying repeated phrases, such as "Peace on earth, good will to men."

For "The Prince of Peace," combinations of parts should be fairly obvious to the director.

## *Prologue to THE PRINCE OF PEACE*

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### **READER:**

*I*N THE STUDY OF WORLD HISTORY WE FIND ONE OF its most interesting aspects in the fact that many ideas are recurrent. They may persist in the minds of men through numerous generations and then emerge in new or altered form; for ideas, though persistent and recurrent, are never static. They grow and change, adapting themselves rather readily to shifting culture patterns.

It is, of course, not easy to trace all the stages in the growth of an idea. There are bound to be dark ages, historical periods when, for a space, each idea is entirely removed from the field of our perception. Yet those concepts that have a real or, to a degree a universal value, may be expected to emerge again, removed in time and distant in location.

It is as if, in the turbulent currents of history, ideas as floating objects appear and disappear on the surface of the stream. Those that have true buoyancy are certain to reappear, and if we but watch patiently, farther down the river, we are sure to be rewarded by seeing them again.

This program is the story of such a concept, born early in the minds of men and often reappearing. It is the idea of a *Prince of Peace*.

Each time this idea of a Prince of Peace has emerged,



it has grown better, stronger, more buoyant than before. Today, in the modern world, it has become more than merely an idea; it is now a widespread, vigorous theme. So extensive and vigorous has it become that some believe, and many hope, it will one day be supreme, recognized as universal truth and as the very crown of every human value.

For our program, entitled "The Prince of Peace," our narrator will be ..... of .....

### *NARRATOR:*

The God of the Hebrews was an unusual god from the very start. True, He was like other gods in some respects. For one thing, He had great creative powers, as had the gods of neighboring peoples such as the Egyptians and the Sumerians. He was accustomed, also, to giving good gifts to his own people, as indeed, they were. Unlike some gods, He had a strong distaste for evil and an equally strong liking for good. Yet even in this He was not unique, as this idea of a god was already well known in Egypt. There it was believed every man must be punished or rewarded for his evil or his good when he appeared before Osiris in the vasty halls of death. Yet in one certain way this God of the Hebrews was different—quite different from them all.

In His covenant with the first Hebrew, Abraham, God promised Him three guarantees of future greatness. The first two—possession of a pleasant land and the blessing of many descendants—were promises such as another god might have made; but the third promise had a subtle quality that sets it apart from all other promises, all other gifts. It marked this God at once as the one true God of all. For

He had promised not only blessings to Abraham, but that God would make him, Abraham, a blessing to others, indeed to all mankind. This sort of promise was certainly unique. It remains unique among the religions of the world unto this very day.

Listen to God's promise to Abraham as read by .....  
of .....

READER:

GENESIS 12: 1-4.

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him: and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

NARRATOR:

This promise to Abraham was repeated several times, always with the same emphasis that through him should all the peoples of the earth be blessed. A second notable occasion for its utterance came directly after Abraham had himself demonstrated his complete faith in the promises of God by the near-sacrifice of his only son, Isaac.

*READER:*

GENESIS 12: 15-19.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

*NARRATOR:*

The first two promises of God to Abraham, being after

all, rather ordinary promises, were in due course of time fulfilled. True, Abraham's descendants had to go through some difficult experiences first, but these perhaps were designed to fit them for the role they were to play. Their slavery in Egypt, their hard-won escape, their wanderings in the desert, all helped make them ready for the great task ahead, the capture and conquest of the Promised Land. After a long, hard-fought period of conquest, a Hebrew king, David, ruled the whole land from Egypt to the Euphrates, even as their God had promised them. For half a century they rode the flood-tide of prosperity and power. The first two promises had now been fulfilled.

During this era of greatness some perhaps fancied the conditions of the third promise would also come to pass, that it was to be through David or his famous son, Solomon, that the blessing to all nations might be revealed. But as the character of their kingship developed it became clear that neither David nor Solomon was an unqualified blessing even to his own people, much less to all mankind.

Then, after Solomon, their troubles began. The people separated into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. These fought each other, with sad results for both. In the face of persistent, increasing foreign aggression, each lost those things they had come to hold most dear. They lost their wealth, their lands, their independence. More than this—they lost their wives, their children and their own bodies into slavery. Most serious of all, the great majority lost forever their sacred heritage or birthright—their faith in the promises of God.

Yet, even while these disasters struck, a new and significant change was also under way. One after another, unusual men called prophets began to appear among them. Some of these men foretold and interpreted political and

military events. Some warned the kings of both kingdoms that their policies could bring only ruin. Some struggled against the inroads of alien religions among their own people. However, some still looked to that great time when the third promise to Abraham should at length be fulfilled.

Gradually, in their consciousness there emerged the idea of a Messiah who, sitting in David's place, should exercise righteous judgment throughout the earth. The golden age, far from being in the past, as the pagan nations believed, was still to come.

Listen to ..... of ..... while he (she) reads the prophecy of Isaiah, depicting the golden age of the future.

### *READER:*

#### ISAIAH 11: 1-9.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth;

and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cocatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

#### *NARRATOR:*

In this golden age of the future, the prophets told their people, peace should come to all mankind. The instrument should be God's Messiah, the Prince of Peace.

#### *READER:*

ISAIAH 9: 2, 6-7.



The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

#### *NARRATOR:*

Thus was born in the minds of men a hope for better times to be. But as the generations and centuries passed this hope dwindled almost to extinction under the repeated blows now suffered by the Hebrew nation. First, the northern kingdom, Israel, came to an end as its ten tribes were carried off into captivity, never to return. Then, the smaller kingdom of Judah almost disappeared. When its people finally returned from a long captivity in Babylon, it was as a miserable, tiny remnant, a sifted and chosen few. Afterward, this little Jewish nation, despite occasional flashes of heroic zeal, fell more and more completely into the hands of its enemies. At last it was merely a puppet state, a slave



satellite in the orbit of mighty Rome.

It now became difficult, even for the most hopeful, to imagine how such a nation could yet become a blessing unto all mankind. Yet a few faithful ones in every generation kept alive the idea and the hope. A few still believed in, were still prepared for *His* coming—the coming of the Prince of Peace. These no doubt often repeated the saying, and equally as often prayed for the time when it would come true:

**READER:**

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings, that publisheth peace . . . that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

**NARRATOR:**

Meanwhile, the great Roman empire had at last found its master. Its first real emperor, Julius Caesar's adopted son, now called Augustus, had embarked upon a program of world organization destined to last for centuries. The central theme of his whole plan was a universal peace based on Roman power and on Rome's essential justice. In time, this *pax Romana*, or Roman peace, came to influence the minds of men even more than it did their lives. To many in a war-torn, pagan world, it seemed like a return of the golden age which had reputedly perished long ago.

In establishing his peace, Augustus resorted to various measures which he felt would convince the world that peace

was really here. A holiday period, set aside for the purpose, inaugurated the new era. The secular games, symbolizing a completely new cycle in human history, he celebrated with a lavish and spectacular display. During the festival he closed the gates of Janus with his own hand. This act, in itself, indicated that peace had returned to Rome. He encouraged the great writers of the day to emphasize the idea of the new age in song and story. In response, Horace, Tibullus, and Virgil produced brilliant verse praising Augustus for the new day now dawning.

In particular, one poem of Virgil, hailing the return of Saturn's golden reign, is so reminiscent of certain passages in Isaiah that later Christians declared it a Messianic prophecy. Virgil, they said, though a pagan, had yet been inspired to sing of the coming of Christ.

..... of ..... will read the famous lines of Virgil's Fourth Eclogue which gave rise to the belief that this was an inspired and prophetic utterance. Notice the mention of a virgin, a newborn babe, the new age, freedom from fear, and other ideas that seem to repeat the Hebrew prophecies of the Messiah.

**READER:**

#### FOURTH ECLOGUE

*Virgil*

Come are those days that once the Sybil sang.  
The age's mighty march begins anew.  
Now comes the virgin, Saturn reigns again;  
A wondrous race descends from heaven's blue

Lucina, smile on this, the new-born babe  
Who first shall end the age of iron, and bid  
A golden dawn appear on this broad world.  
Now thy Apollo reigns. And Pollio, thou  
Shalt be our prince, when he that grander age,  
Whose mighty moons roll onward one by one,  
Shall open to his people here below.

Thou, trampling out what prints our crimes have left  
Shalt free the nations from perpetual fear.  
Thus he to bliss shall waken; evermore  
The Blest and Brave shall mingle, while he rules  
The world o'er which his father's arm shed lasting peace.

On thee, child, everywhere shall earth untilled  
Show'r her first baby-offerings, vagrant stems  
Of ivy, fox-glove, and gay briar, and bean;  
Thy cradle shall be filled with fairest flowers,  
For Syria's roses then shall spring like weeds;  
But treach'rous poison plants and serpents all must die.

And now the time is all but present,—O draw near  
To thy great glory, cherished child of heaven,  
Jove's mighty progeny! For lo, the world,  
The round and ponderous world, bows down to thee;  
The earth, the ocean tracts, the depths of heaven.  
Lo, nature revels in the coming age.  
Oh, may the evening of my days last on,  
May breath be granted me, till I tell all thy deeds!

NARRATOR:

That these lines actually were a prophecy of the Messiah was not true. Yet their similarity to passages in the Old Testament *plus* their nearness to the actual event of the birth of Jesus brought into focus the idea that the era of peace and the birth of the Prince of Peace were closely related. Christ's coming at this propitious moment, in the fullness of time, as part of a divine plan for man's salvation, became an important aspect of the Christian tradition. Religious writers realized at once the *value* of this idea, while poets captured its *beauty*. John Milton, in his "Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity" expressed it in a few exquisite lines. Listen while ..... of ..... reads the appropriate portion of Milton's verse; as he speaks of the great era of world peace already in existence on that first Christmas day.

**READER:**

No war, or battle's sound  
Was heard the world around;  
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;  
The hookèd chariot stood  
Unstained with hostile blood;  
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;  
And kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.  
But peaceful was the night  
Wherein the Prince of Light  
His reign of peace upon the earth began.

## NARRATOR:

A somewhat humbler poet, Alfred Domett, in a poem called "A Christmas Hymn" has captured the same idea well in a series of work pictures. He reminds us that most persons of that day were actually unaware of what was going on in that Judean stable. His first stanzas in particular point up the connection between this event and the era of the Roman Peace. .... of ..... will read Domett's "Christmas Hymn."

## READER:

## CHRISTMAS HYMN

*Alfred Domett*

It was the calm and silent night!—  
    Seven hundred years and fifty-three  
Had Rome been growing up to might,  
    And now was Queen of land and sea!  
No sound was heard of clashing wars;  
    Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;  
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars,  
    Held undisturbed their ancient reign,  
    In the solemn midnight  
    Centuries ago!

'Twas in the calm and silent night!  
    The senator of haughty Rome  
Impatient urged his chariot's flight  
    From lordly revel rolling home!  
Triumphal arches, gleaming, swell

His breast with thoughts of boundless sway:  
What recked the Roman what befell  
A paltry province far away,  
In the solemn midnight  
Centuries ago!

Within that province far away  
Went plodding home a weary boor;  
A streak of light before him lay,  
Fall'n through a half-shut stable door  
Across his path. He passed—for naught  
Told what was going on within;  
How keen the stars! his only thought;  
The air how calm and cold and thin,  
In the solemn midnight  
Centuries ago!

O strange indifference!—low and high  
Drowsed over common joys and cares:  
The earth was still—but knew not why;  
The world was listening—unawares;  
How calm a moment may precede  
One that shall thrill the world for ever!  
To that still moment none would heed,  
Man's doom was linked no more to sever  
In the solemn midnight  
Centuries ago!

It is the calm and solemn night!  
A thousand bells ring out, and throw  
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite  
The darkness, charmed and holy now!  
The night that erst no name had worn,



To it a happy name is given;  
For in that stable lay new-born  
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,  
In the solemn midnight  
Centuries ago!

*NARRATOR:*

There has been no doubt in the minds of Christians that the birth of the baby Jesus marked the coming of God's Messiah, the promised Prince of Peace. The beautiful story of the shepherds and the angels, so impressive to us in childhood, does not in our maturity lose any of its charm. Rather, it grows in significance and power as our earthly years roll by.

..... of ..... will read Luke's wonderfully impressive account of that holy night, centuries ago.

*READER:*

LUKE 2: 7-15.

And she brought forth her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.



And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

#### NARRATOR:

Since that night in old Judea the story of Bethlehem's babe has found its way into the lives of men and women. The *Gloria in Excelsis* which the angels sang has been said

or sung countless times in numberless churches. In sermon and story, in music and drama we have heralded the day and retold the fact that "songs of praise awoke the morn when the Prince of Peace was born." Throughout our Christmas season the chimes repeat the tale with many a well-loved hymn; and on Christmas morning the bells ring out with what Scrooge, at least, knew where "the lustiest peals he had ever heard," when he awoke on that notable and wondrous Christmas Day depicted so well in Dickens' *Christmas Carol*.

It was the Christmas bells, in fact, that inspired our own beloved Longfellow to add his word to the hope for peace inherent in this holy season. Written during war years, Longfellow's poem raises the question of whether peace shall ever come; but ends with the conviction that God is not dead or asleep and that in His own good time He will bring peace on earth, good will to men.

..... of ..... will read stanzas from Longfellow's poem "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

READER:

## I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
    Had rolled along  
    The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursèd mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
    And with the sound  
    The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
    "For hate is strong,  
    And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep;  
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!  
    The Wrong shall fail,  
    The Right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"

**NARRATOR:**

Yet, despite the hopes and aspirations of men, as the nearly two thousand years have gone by, the thought of universal peace seems nothing but a dream and the reign of the Prince of Peace one long record of failure. In modern times, as in earlier ages, war, not peace, has been the cus-

tomary and approved pattern for settling mankind's disputes and misunderstandings.

It is true that peace has also had its advocates and that in every generation a few have kept alive the idea and the hope. On occasion, strong leaders have striven earnestly, each in his own way, to realize the ideal of universal peace. Especially in recent times, there have been those who believed that international organization would provide the means to this achievement. This suggestion was made, perhaps not for the first time, but in a confident and prophetic spirit, by the English poet, Alfred Tennyson. More than a century ago, Tennyson wrote "Locksley Hall" and built into it his vision of the future, a vision of a last great warlike struggle in the sky, after which man would settle down to a rule of law and order.

Listen to ..... of ..... who will read Tennyson's well-known lines, "For I dipt into the future."

READER:

(From *Locksley Hall*)

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye  
could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder  
that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies  
of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down  
with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there  
rained a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in  
the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-  
wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging through  
the thunderstorm;

Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the  
battle flags were furled  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the  
world.

#### *NARRATOR:*

Since Tennyson's death, two successive international organizations have been formed. Their proponents, in each case, no doubt imagined that here might be the basic structure which would grow into a parliament of man such as Tennyson had envisioned. Yet up to the present moment, though some gains have indeed been made, the shadows of force and violence are ever before us. Despite the hope of religion and the sentiment of beautiful verse, many are inclined to doubt that international world peace will ever come at all. Some say that in the divine plan it was not intended for man upon this earth; some, that it is inexpedient or even unnatural to expect it.

Whatever the truth of these contentions, or whatever the outcome here may be, for Christians there remains a

way by which Jesus already stands revealed, not only as Emmanuel, God with us, but as the Prince of Peace heralded long ago by prophets and by angels.

Clearly, it is in a personal and individual way that we may come to know Him, and the peace that comes to us through His power. In all the ages countless Christians have borne witness to this fact, that when they have opened their hearts for Him to enter, peace has entered with Him—a deep and abiding peace, a peace, indeed, that passes all understanding.

Each year, therefore, as Christmas time approaches, we prepare anew to welcome Bethlehem's babe among us. Each year the angels sing to us above the Judaeian hills, and we who already know the song so well, are only too glad to stop once more and listen . . . listen to their message: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, Peace, good will to men."

..... of ..... will bring our program to a close.  
Our pianist is ..... of .....

*(At this point the pianist plays a few bars from each of several Christmas hymns. The third or fourth one is to the tune of: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear." After playing two bars of this the pianist stops and the reader reads:)*

READER:

For lo! the days are hastening on  
By prophets seen of old,  
When with the ever-circling years  
Shall come the time foretold,  
When the new Heavens and Earth shall own  
The Prince of Peace their king,



And the whole world send back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

*(When this is completed, the pianist resumes with the music of hymns. This time the third tune is that of: "O Little Town of Bethlehem." After two bars of this, the reader reads:)*

READER:

O Holy Child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us we pray  
Cast out our sin and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuell!

*(When the reader completes this stanza, the pianist finishes the music as written and the program is over.)*

*(Note to Director: Re-read the introduction to the "Prince of Peace" for a suggestion as to how it may be concluded. Note also the suggestion for ending a program at the end of "War and Peace.")*

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RENAISSANCE PORTRAITS

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*PART* V



## *Introduction to "RENAISSANCE PORTRAITS"*

THE PROGRAM "RENAISSANCE PORTRAITS" HAS LESS popular appeal than any of the other three included in this volume. It is therefore not so likely to be used as entertainment or general programming. On the other hand, it has a considerable educational significance, which led to its inclusion in this volume.

It differs from the rest in that all the readings are by the same author and all deal with the same subject, namely, life in a given period of the past. The period itself, the Italian Renaissance, was colorful enough in strict truth, so that the dramatic monologues of Browning, here presented, probably add nothing to facts that could easily be collected in their support. The individuals who speak, though entirely fictional, could easily have been real life characters in that fabulous era.

Historically, however, a strong warning should be sounded. The characters here depicted are all selfish in character and sordid in spirit. One might readily get the notion, therefore, that all people of that time were sordid and selfish. This, of course, was not true in that age or in any other. To accept this blindly would be the same as assuming that all Americans were like the headline personalities of some scandal sheet.

On the other hand, it would be appropriate to remember

that many Americans, by reading those same scandal sheets, do to some extent identify themselves (at least by tacit acceptance) with that same scandalous conduct. So we may assume that Renaissance folk in many instances were aware of and not outspokenly opposed to the immoral practices often described in the literature of their own day. In one sense, then, Browning, by deft and subtle handling of his characters' worst traits, may be said to have done them a favor.

It should also be said that any such description of the Italian Renaissance as found in this program is necessarily limited to a few narrow aspects of the total life of that era. Yet it is remarkable how many characteristics of human life in general, and of Renaissance life in particular, Browning has been able to work into these four brief poems.

The author, in writing this program, might well be criticized for concentration on these four monologues. Another person might have left out one of these and added another, say "Andrea del Sarto" or "Fra Lippo Lippi." The choice was dictated, of course, by personal preference and by an attempt to get into the picture as wide a variety as might be. In any case, the present effort is only a small beginning in the vast fields of interest represented by the work of Robert Browning.

The narration explains why Browning was eminently fitted to portray Italian life of this earlier era in view of his appreciation of historical values. The poems themselves show why a study of Browning represents an area of endeavor peculiarly attractive to persons seeking intellectual stimulation. In general, these writings yield up their meanings reluctantly and with something of a struggle. Once clear, however, they provide a satisfaction which is at once great, distinctive and convincing.

For these reasons, this program makes a fine introduction to a study of Browning, or indeed to any advanced study of poetry in general. College classes, for example, could get well started on a course in Browning by beginning with a program of this sort. The same is true of any study group, say, a women's club, that feels the need for a stimulating intellectual outlet. From here they could, with proper leadership, go on to produce other programs based on various aspects of Browning's greatness, or on the works of other poets. The author can envision a number of such topics that could well be built into similar reading programs.

"Renaissance Portraits" has been presented only in history classes to date, but competent English teachers have heard it and read it with enthusiasm. Speech teachers, too, regard it highly as a valuable contribution to the field of interpretive reading.

In reading these monologues the four readers should remember that these poems *do* yield up their meanings with some difficulty. Preparation, therefore, calls for a considerable study until the reader is sure he knows what every sentence and every word should mean. Pronunciation is also a matter of concern, not only for meaning, but to help with the smoothness of reading. Browning's rhythms are difficult enough without the added handicap of a wrong accent or too many syllables at any given point.

In addition to being meticulously well prepared the reader must also remember his audience in another way. This is the *first time for them*, so he must read accordingly. Realizing his own difficulties the first time *he* read this poem, he must now read it so as to avoid these same difficulties for his audience.

One advantage he will have in doing this, and indeed,



the one condition that makes it possible, is the narration. In the narration, the hearers have already been told what they are to hear and, to that extent, are prepared to hear it. The reader now reads to bring out, as nearly as he can, the points made in the narration. It is this close coordination between the work of the narrator with that of the reader that brings each of these monologues to life at the first hearing and thus makes the program a success.

As to readers, all these poems can be read by either men or women. A possible exception is the poem "In a Laboratory." It is a little difficult to fit a man into this part. The bishop, the nobleman and the poet-bystander are men, of course, and these monologues should theoretically, therefore, be done by men's voices. In practice, women do just as well, often better, than men. This may be because they are willing to try to do this "just right."

If there is any key to the success of the program "Renaissance Portraits," it is, surely, a willingness to take the time to learn how to say every word to give it the right meaning and then to take the time to say it just that way. Advice to most readers must be, "Slow down, slow down, and then slow down some more."

READER:

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING WAYS TO ORGANIZE the study of history is by breaking down its contents into *Kulturbilder* or "culture pictures." These are pictures of past times brought to our attention with some detail and color. They are attempts to introduce a sense of reality such as is not always present in the ordinary study of the earlier ages.

In this process of study we select a particular part of history and study it in two ways. First, we try to see it as a whole. Second, we select certain phases or certain persons and study these more closely, choosing items which are vivid and colorful, which yet illustrate important general aspects of the period.

One such culture picture often studied with enjoyment and enthusiasm is known as the Italian Renaissance. The obvious reasons for our interest in it lie in the nature of the period itself. The more subtle reasons are the result of what Renaissance people thought and said about themselves. For never has a human society seemed so confident that it had now reached the pinnacle of earthly living. Never has the zest for life been stronger than it apparently was then.

An examination of the varied records that have come down to us forces us to this conclusion. As we read piece

after piece we are increasingly convinced that the leaders, at least, were well pleased with what they were doing. The sonnets of Petrarch; the off-color tales of Boccaccio; the confident history of Guicciardini; the bold autobiography of that lovable rascal Benvenuto Cellini; the gossip lives of the artists as told by Vasari; the calm practices of unscrupulous political efficiency revealed by Machiavelli; last, but by no means least, the masterly performances of the great artists themselves: all these reveal a spirited society very sure of its own purposes and deeply immersed in the joy of living. The few exceptions, such as the case of the reformer and revivalist Savonarola, seem only to prove the rule.

The Italian Renaissance was a time of sharp contrasts: of men holy and of men profane; of Christians and pagan pictures side by side; of towering achievements and of sordid living; of a strenuous desire to relive the ancient past and a strong purpose to experiment and move forward into the future. Its main theme, however, is summed up in the word *humanism*, literally, an interest in man. In those days, "Man is the measure of all things" had become a reality for most people. The individual came into his own at last, whether due to his wealth, his personality or his achievement.

Of all persons who have considered and exploited the materials of the Italian Renaissance, the Victorian poet Robert Browning seems to have understood its people most clearly. Long residence in Italy, where he deliberately sought out evidence of the past; a brilliant mind and vivid imagination unhampered by the restraints of specialized scholarly training; a profound sympathy for every man and woman he describes; and a supreme facility with words to give us the most precise description of emotionalized con-

duct—all these factors make Browning a magnificent por-trayer of life in that pattern of the past which we call the Italian Renaissance.

For this program we have selected a few of Browning's shorter poems to illustrate some of these ideas. Each one is a dramatic monologue where Browning speaks through the mouth of a character he has created. The four selections chosen reveal a variety of scenes, any one of which could easily have been a true event of that colorful period.

Our narrator will be ..... of .....

## NARRATOR:

The first picture is that of a potential murder by the process of poisoning. The girl in the story is seen entering a laboratory to purchase the poison. She is talking to the old chemist who prepares it, but really is speaking more to her-self than to him. She is talking, in fact, to keep her anger up and her courage strong. She tells how shamefully her lover and her rival have treated her, and she gloats over the projected horrible death of her rival in full sight of the man they both desire. She evidently considers making a practice of it, too, as she mentions at least two other prospective victims of her murderous conduct, and she talks about the approved methods of carrying and administering the lethal doses she intends to use. Only once does she have a qualm of conscience, and this quickly disappears as she explains it all away. A major aim she has developed is to accomplish her purpose not only with impunity but in a lighthearted way which will leave no impression on her own capacity for joyful and sinful living. Her original sensitive nature oc-casionally peeps through the cold anger of her talk as she

mentions the color and taste of the poison and exhibits a fear of the dust that clings to her clothing. But her built-up, solid control returns as she anticipates an evening's pleasure of dancing after the murderous deed is done.

..... of ..... will read "The Laboratory," by Robert Browning.

READER:

### THE LABORATORY

*Robert Browning*

Now that I, tying thy glass mask tightly,  
May gaze through these faint smokes curling whitely,  
As thou pliest thy trade in this devil's-smithy—  
Which is the poison to poison her, prithee?

He is with her, and they know that I know  
Where they are, what they do: they believe my tears flow  
While they laugh, laugh at me, at me fled to the drear  
Empty church, to pray God in, for them!—I am here.

Grind away, moisten and mash up thy paste,  
Pound at thy powder,—I am not in haste!  
Better sit thus, and observe thy strange things,  
Than go where men wait me and dance at the King's.

That in the mortar—you call it a gum?  
Ah, the brave tree whence such gold oozings come!  
And yonder soft phial, the exquisite blue,  
Sure to taste sweetly,—is that poison too?



Had I but all of them, thee and thy treasures,  
What a wild crowd of invisible pleasures!  
To carry pure death in an earring, a casket,  
A signet, a fan-mount, a filigree basket!

Soon, at the King's, a mere lozenge to give,  
And Pauline should have just thirty minutes to live!  
But to light a pastille, and Elise, with her head  
And her breast and her arms and her hands,  
should drop dead!

Quick—is it finished? The color's too grim!  
Why not soft like the phial's, enticing and dim?  
Let it brighten her drink, let her turn it and stir,  
And try it and taste, ere she fix and prefer!

What a drop! She's not little, no minion like me!  
That's why she ensnared him: this never will free  
The soul from those masculine eyes,—say, “no!”  
To that pulse's magnificent come-and-go.

For only last night, as they whispered, I brought  
My own eyes to bear on her so, that I thought  
Could I keep them one half minute fixed, she would fall  
Shrivelled; she fell not; yet this does it all!

Not that I bid you spare her the pain;  
Let death be felt and the proof remain;  
Brand, burn up, bite into its grace—  
He is sure to remember her dying face!

Is it done? Take my mask off! Nay, be not morose;  
It kills her, and this prevents seeing it close:



The delicate droplet, my whole fortune's fee!  
If it hurts her, beside, can it ever hurt me?

Now, take all my jewels, gorge gold to your fill,  
You may kiss me, old man, on my mouth if you will!  
But brush this dust off me, lest horror it brings  
Ere I know it—next moment I dance at the King's!

### *NARRATOR:*

The second picture from Browning illustrates other characteristic traits of Renaissance people. A nobleman, very proud of his ancient lineage, is about to sell his 900-year-old name for money. This is to be accomplished through the medium of matrimony, and the money is the dowry of the bride. The nobleman is talking to the agent of the father of the prospective bride, that agent having come to close the bargain.

During the visit the nobleman has been showing his collected art treasures scattered through his villa, and as the scene opens, they have reached a place upstairs. Here the nobleman draws aside a pair of curtains and reveals an exquisite painting of an exquisite woman on the wall.

"That's my last duchess," he says, "painted on the wall."

Continuing, he makes quite a point of the wonder of the art work itself, explainable only because it was done by the master artist Fra Pandolf, himself. Soon, however, the picture calls up memories of his last duchess and their life together. He tells exactly what was wrong with her—for she had "a heart too soon made glad." He illustrates this with several examples of her conduct. This he could not tolerate,

yet he could not stoop to explain to her why she did not please him. Consequently, he tells how he let it run on and on until he could not abide it any longer and then suddenly stamped out all her joy with his commands. Then, he says, "all smiles ceased," and (though he does not say so), we get the impression she died, presumably of a broken heart.

All this the nobleman has told with a cold and heartless matter-of-factness and with no sense whatever of regret. He reveals himself as a man utterly selfish, utterly ruthless, utterly cruel. Then, perhaps because he sees a certain expression on the agent's face, he hastens to assure him that his new bride will be loved for her own dear self alone. At the same time, he insinuates a not too subtle hint that the dowry offering, due to the known munificence of the agent's master, will no doubt be commensurate with the occasion.

As they start downstairs, the last duchess and the new one are both forgotten and the art tour is resumed. The host is pointing out to his guest another object of art, "Neptune taming a sea horse, thought a rarity, which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me."

..... of ..... will read "My Last Duchess."

READER:

## MY LAST DUCHESS

*Robert Browning*

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands

Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff  
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,  
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
Or blush, at least. She thanked men—good! but thanked  
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
In speech—which I have not—to make your will

Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this  
Or that in your disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
The company below, then. I repeat  
The Count your master's known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

NARRATOR:

In the third selection, the scene shifts to the bedside of a dying bishop. Again it is a monologue, as the bishop talks to some younger men who stand at the foot of the bed. His favorite son, Anselm, is among them. As the title says, he is literally ordering his tomb, which will be built in the niche he has fought to save for himself in Saint Praxed's Church. He describes the location of the spot in the church where the tomb will be and imagines how it will seem to lie there

through the years and watch the things that go on in the church. At times, by his dreamy manner, he seems almost there already.

It's true, his rival, Gandolf, has a better place, the Bishop says; but his tomb is merely of onion-stone, while the Bishop's will be of smooth basalt and surrounded by nine columns of pink marble. Moreover, his inscription will be better than Gandolf's, since it will be taken, every word, from Tully, *i.e.*, from Cicero; while Gandolf's included an error, (the word *Elucescebat*), due to its having been selected from a lesser Latinist, Ulpian.

The Bishop also envisions the wondrous sculptured motifs that will surround his tomb, mentioning the alternate Biblical scenes and the pagan nymphs in a glorified striptease, all in one breath. The crowning glory of his tomb is to be, however, a big lump of lapis lazuli he saved from a former fire in his own church and buried for safety against this very day. He now reveals its hiding place and instructs the boys how it is to be placed on his tomb between the knees of his effigy.

All the time he is talking, though, he sees it is a losing business. The young men, he discerns, are whispering together, obviously planning to build his tomb of cheaper materials and to use the balance of the money and the price of the lapis lazuli for their own pleasures. Even Anselm, the one he seemed to trust, is going along with them. He tries desperately to bargain with them, offering his influence with Saint Praxed to secure the things they most desire. But all this is of no avail. Slowly, surely, he suggests less and less, if they will but promise. He goes from basalt and marble to jasper, thence to "mouldy travertine," and finally realizes they will actually bury him in "sweaty gritstone" so that Gandolf will have a better tomb than he.



Even so, despite their treacherous ingratitude, he still is able to forgive them, for from where he will lie in the peacefulness of the church he will be able to watch old Gandolf leer at him in envy. This envy will not indeed be for his niche nor for the quality of his tomb, but for a fact that they will both remember. It seems that long ago they had both loved a woman and she had preferred the Bishop. So, whatever else happens, Gandolf is sure to envy him throughout eternity because this woman was so fair.

..... of ..... will read "The Bishop Orders his Tomb."

READER:

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT  
SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

*Robert Browning*

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!  
Draw round my bed: Is Anselm keeping back?  
Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I know not!

Well—

She, men would have to be your mother once,  
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!  
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,  
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,  
And as she died so must we die ourselves,  
And thence ye may perceive the world's a dream.  
Life, how and what is it? As here I lie  
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,  
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask



“Do I live, am I dead?” Peace, peace seems all.  
Saint Praxed’s ever was the church for peace;  
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought  
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know:  
—Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care;  
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner South  
He graced his carrion with, God curse the same!  
Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence  
One sees the pulpit o’ the epistle-side,  
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,  
And up into the aery dome where live  
The angels, and a sunbeam’s sure to lurk:  
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,  
And ’neath my tabernacle take my rest,  
With those nine columns round me, two by two,  
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:  
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe  
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.  
—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,  
Put me where I may look at him! True peach,  
Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!  
Draw close: that conflagration of my church  
—What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!  
My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig  
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,  
Drop water gently till the surface sink,  
And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .  
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,  
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,  
Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,  
Big as a Jew’s head cut off at the nape,  
Blue as a vein o’er the Madonna’s breast . . .  
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,

That brave Frascati villa with its bath,  
 So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,  
 Like God the Father's globe on both his hands  
 Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,  
 For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!  
 Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:  
 Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?  
 Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—  
 'T was ever antique-black I meant! How else  
 Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?  
 The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,  
 Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance  
 Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,  
 The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,  
 Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan  
 Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment off,  
 And Moses with the tables . . . but I know  
 Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,  
 Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope  
 To revel down my villas while I gasp  
 Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine  
 Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!  
 Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!  
 'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve.  
 My bath must needs be left behind, alas!  
 One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,  
 There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—  
 And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray  
 Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts  
 And mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs  
 —That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,  
 Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,  
 No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—

Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!  
And then how I shall lie through centuries,  
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,  
And see God made and eaten all day long,  
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste  
Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!  
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,  
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,  
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,  
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,  
And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop  
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:  
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts  
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,  
About the life before I lived this life,  
And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,  
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,  
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,  
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,  
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,  
—Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?  
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!  
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.  
All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope  
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?  
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,  
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,  
Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,  
Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase  
With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,  
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx  
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus down,  
To comfort me on my entablature

Whereon I am to lie till I must ask  
 "Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me, there!  
 For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude  
 To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it!

Stone—

Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares which sweat  
 As if the corpse they keep were oozing through—  
 And no more *lapis* to delight the world!  
 Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,  
 But in a row: and, going, turning your backs  
 —Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,  
 And leave me in my church, the church for peace,  
 That I may watch at leisure if he leers—  
 Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-stone,  
 As still he envied me, so fair she was!

# NARRATOR:

Our last selection for this program is called "A Toccata of Galuppi's." It is said that this piece originated in the mind of the poet as he was playing an actual toccata of Galuppi on the organ. This is a monologue in which the poet is the speaker, interpreting the music of Galuppi, taking his meaning and presenting it to us.

The first theme is essentially a description of life in Venice among the young, carefree, pleasure-loving people of that city. A particular couple is singled out to represent the whole group. These two are imagined as pausing from the ceaseless round of pleasure to listen for a moment to the music of the toccata, as Galuppi himself might have played it long ago.

At times the poet seems to speak through the mouth of the young man or the young woman. At other times he seems to address Galuppi in his own person. The whole picture is one of rare beauty, which is yet beauty of this world, and one therefore which is bound to stop some day and fall into dust. The Venetians are pictured as butterflies whose hours are soon to end, who, while they live, enjoy life to the uttermost and scarcely take time to dread the extinction which is certain to come. When they do take time to fear death, they have no answer for this fear; so, to cover it they merely increase the tempo of pleasure-seeking to a new peak of excitement.

Galuppi himself, the poet suggests, is above this fear of death, since one with such great talents and achievements as his cannot really die. It is a Renaissance idea that cultured excellence may indeed be a passport to immortality. It is not Browning's idea, exactly, though we do find evidence of similar thought elsewhere in his writing.

The whole tenor of the poet's theme is made sad and plaintive to correspond to the music. The musical references to "thirds," "sixths," etc., indicate this trend, followed by the poem in conformity to the toccata itself. The whole point is that Maytime frolicking yields no answer to the winter-time of death.

At the end, the poet himself feels "chilly and grown old."  
 ..... of ..... will now read "A Toc-  
 cata of Galuppi's."

*READER:*

## A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

*Robert Browning*



Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!  
 I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and  
     blind;  
 But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy  
     mind!

Here you come with your old music, and here's all the good  
     it brings.  
 What, they lived once thus at Venice where the merchants  
     were the kings,  
 Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to wed the sea  
     with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and 'tis arched by . . .  
     what you call  
 . . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it, where they kept  
     the carnival:  
 I was never out of England—it's as if I saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when the sea was  
     warm in May?  
 Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning ever to  
     mid-day,  
 When they made up fresh adventures for the morrow, do  
     you say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and lips so red;—  
 On her neck the small face buoyant, like a bell-flower on  
     its bed,  
 O'er the breast's superb abundance where a man might  
     base his head?

Well, and it was graceful of them: they'd break talk off  
     and afford



—She, to bite her mask's black velvet, he, to finger on his  
sword,  
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at the clavi-  
chord?

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished,  
sigh on sigh,  
Told them something? Those suspensions, those solutions—  
“Must we die?”  
Those commiserating sevenths—“Life might last! we can  
but try!”

“Were you happy?”—“Yes.”—“And are you still as happy?”  
—“Yes. And you?”  
—“Then, more kisses!”—“Did *I* stop them, when a million  
seemed so few?”

Hark, the dominant's persistence till it must be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they praised you, I  
dare say!

“Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike at grave  
and gay!

I can always leave off talking when I hear a master play!”

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due time, one  
by one,

Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as  
well undone.

Death stepped tacitly, and took them where they never  
see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to take my stand nor  
swerve,

While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from nature's close  
reserve,  
In you come with your cold music till I creep through every  
nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking where a house  
was burned:

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice spent what  
Venice earned.

The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where a soul can be dis-  
cerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics, something of  
geology,

Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall rise in their  
degree;

Butterflies may dread extinction,—you'll not die, it cannot  
be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely born to bloom and  
drop,

Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth and folly were  
the crop;

What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had to  
stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I want the heart  
to scold.

Dear dead women, with such hair, too—what's become of  
all the gold

Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel chilly and  
grown old.

**NARRATOR:**

This ends our program. The people pictured by Browning could, of course, represent people of any of numerous ages in world history. We feel they are particularly appropriate to certain phases of life in the days of the Italian Renaissance.



















tion and readings can either be included or omitted. Every one has been presented before large groups and has proved to be as simple and practical for the performers as it was entertaining and informative for the audience. Professor Alter has not sacrificed quality to practicality, however. He has chosen reading selections that are stimulating to both younger and adult audiences and represent the finest thinking and expression on the various subjects.

Eugene M. Waffle, Head of the Department of English of Eastern Illinois State College, says **THE LINCOLN LEGEND AND OTHER PROGRAMS** ". . . is the perfect marriage of literature and history. The book is a must for every teacher of these subjects who hopes to make his material vital and real to his students. Here is correlation on a high level."

Lloyd George Venard, President of Venard, Rintoul and McConnell, Inc., TV and Radio Station Representatives, states: "These programs meet a need in America today. Any group in amateur theatricals should welcome them, as the book provides a full season of worthwhile presentations. The programs are inspiring; their technique offers quick adaptation for use on the platform or on the air."





### *About the Author*

Dr. Donald R. Alter has spent virtually his entire life teaching or preparing to teach. Born in Kirkwood, Missouri, he received his B.S. in Education from Missouri University, his M.A. from Columbia, his Ph.D. in History from the University of Illinois and has done additional graduate work at Harvard.

For the past 22 years he has been a member of the Social Science department at Eastern Illinois State College in Charleston, where he now lives. Before that, he was a high school principal and also served as a critic-teacher at the University of Illinois. He has lectured in surrounding communities, notably on the Historical Backgrounds of the Old Testament and of the New Testament.

Dr. Alter's memberships include the National and Illinois Education Associations, the Illinois Council for the Social Studies and Phi Alpha Theta, an honor society in History.